# *The* MYSTERY *of* RELIGION

EVERETT DEAN MARTIN

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*The Mystery of Religion*

# The Mystery of Religion

## A STUDY IN SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

BY
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E-Y

*To My Wife*
*Persis Eastman R. Martin*

# CONTENTS


| CHAPTER | | PAGE |
|---|---|---|
| | PREFACE . . . . . | ix |
| I. | MYSTERIES OF RELIGION . . | 1 |
| II. | MODES OF RELIGIOUS THINKING | 28 |
| III. | RELIGION SPEAKS IN SYMBOLS . | 59 |
| IV. | THE FUNCTION OF THE FATHER IMAGE . . . . . | 115 |
| V. | SIN AND REDEMPTION . . . | 150 |
| VI. | THE RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY . | 220 |
| VII. | FORMS OF RELIGIOUS BEHAVIOR . | 278 |
| VIII. | ARE WE FACING A REVIVAL OF RELIGION? . . . . . | 335 |

# PREFACE

This book is a study in Social Psychology. Social Psychology is a comparatively new subject of investigation. The greatest advance in this field is to be made not by attempting to lay down general principles which will cover the whole of the phenomena to be studied, but by isolating certain specific problems and analyzing their elements according to that psychological method which leads us to the most fruitful hypotheses. The method of psychopathology is of the greatest assistance to the student in this field.

From the standpoint of Social Psychology, the religious problem is of prime importance. Not only are many facts of social behavior the outgrowth of religious motives, but these motives are themselves to a great extent social in their origin and nature. Surely the imagery and emotional fixations which have their origin in the relation of the child to its parents, and, as we shall see, play an important rôle in religious

experience, properly belong to Social Psychology. An understanding of these motives should aid us to the understanding of many social phenomena which are not directly associated with religion.

The scope of this study is, therefore, necessarily limited. The subject of religion is so rich and varied that it has been necessary to exclude much that is of genuine psychological interest. The material upon which I have drawn is confined largely to Protestant Christianity. I am convinced that a Catholic or a Jew, using the psychological method that I have used, would paint a somewhat different picture. But this fact has its advantages. Most studies of religion are too general. One is really qualified to deal adequately with only those aspects of religion with which he has immediate personal acquaintance. Studies similar in spirit to this one should be made with the background of Catholicism, Judaism, and other religious communities. It is only through a number of such analyses that we may gain a comprehensive view of religion as a whole.

While, therefore, this book reflects a definite background of religious culture, it should be remembered that the narrowing of the scope

here does not necessarily distort the picture of the experience so studied. The elements which are most emphasized in Protestant Christianity are not at all confined to it, but are part of the psychology of religious experience itself.

The problem of religion is of special interest in America. Much new knowledge about our world and about ourselves must be assimilated by persons whose outlook on life has been achieved under religious influences. Religion itself has become a problem. An increasing number are coming to see it as essentially a problem of human nature. To understand it better is to gain new and deeper knowledge of oneself. In the first three chapters I have dealt at some length with the symbolic significance of religious ideas because, unless one sees that religion is not primarily a knowledge affair, it is impossible for him to come to a correct psychological valuation of it. The fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh chapters should be of much interest to special students of the subject. In the concluding chapter I have suggested a solution of the problem in so far as social philosophy has a contribution to make. To follow out the implications of this suggestion would lead us beyond the scope of our

study, which is essentially analytical. But it would appear that somewhere in this direction lies the future of religion for thoughful people. And perhaps I may be permitted the hope that such self-analysis as I am here trying to lead the reader through is but a door opening out to a new appreciation of the spiritual values of life.

E. D. M.

NEW YORK, *October 1, 1923.*

*The Mystery of Religion*

# I

## *Mysteries of Religion*

RELIGIOUS practices and beliefs, other than those to which we have grown accustomed, appear strange to us. The ceremonies and religious ideas of the "heathen" often strike the Christian as weird, and even foolish, while the same heathen may look upon Christian practices with amazement or stand unmoved in the presence of what to the Christian mind are the most sacred realities. But it is not necessary to contemplate these radical differences in religion to discover in the various forms of religious behavior evidences of inner secrets, unspoken and inexpressible things that move the heart of the believer, but appear merely exotic when viewed from without. Catholic and Jew and the various Protestant sects have each something which the others do not and doubtless can not "understand."

What are these inner realities? To what

motives and desires in human nature do they minister? What is here seeking to express itself? And what, viewed as forms of adaptation, is the value of these queer types of behavior?

In those moments when we pause and look over our shoulders with flashes of curiosity or illumination that seem to come from regions outside our early training and daily routine, even our own most commonplace religious practices must strike us as rather inexplicable things for creatures like ourselves to be doing. We find people, whose actions are normally fairly well adjusted to a world of familiar objects, suddenly making curious gestures, speaking strange words, using unaccustomed tones of voice, addressing invisible persons, ceasing from labor on certain days, or abstaining from food and normal sex relationships for long periods, again standing in awe of certain persons, places, books. Frequently we find our fellows and ourselves modifying our conduct according to commandments imposed upon us by some invisible authority and without regard to the ordinary results in experience. And yet again we find people calling themselves sinners, seeking to be delivered from a burden of

nameless guilt. Ask such persons just what are the concrete misdeeds which trouble their memories and often they cannot tell.

The explanations commonly given for such actions never quite explain. They always seem to presuppose something still more difficult. And this is equally true whether the explanation is offered by the religious devotee himself or by the student of religion.

Those scholars of our day who have the habit of looking on all forms of behavior as modes of adaptation to environment would appear to find difficulty in offering an account of religious practices. A common method is that of anthropology, which seeks to trace traditional religious customs and beliefs back to some simple primitive origin. This method has its advantages; it is scientific. It treats its subject as a natural phenomenon. And by tracing the steps of the advance from the primitive to the modern it brings religious progress within the evolutionary process, shows its relations to the general advance of culture and the development of institutions, and throws much light upon the history of various religious practices.

But it can tell us very little about religion as

experience. Thus we may learn much about the *deposits* of religion in history, but very little about religious interests themselves. What we wish to learn is why people behave in ways that may be termed religious. Why are they evidently obliged in vast numbers and for long periods to entertain certain fixed beliefs. What is the nature and real meaning of these things.

To reach if possible a better understanding of this real meaning, this secret "under-side" of religious phenomena is the aim of our present study. We shall assume that something here is seeking at once to disguise and reveal itself. Something very vital to the human psyche, yet something that is for the most part hidden from the ordinary consciousness of the believer. We shall attempt to bring to consciousness some of these unrecognized and unattended religious motives. We shall strive to see them in the light of present day psychology. We shall study certain facts of religious experience, not with the purpose of rationalizing religion as such, but rather in order that we may gain a more penetrating insight into human nature. Most men, in all stages of culture, are religious beings. Religious practices

are therefore characteristic modes of human behavior. And while it is true that the overt ceremonies and cult ideas of religion differ enormously, it is possible that analysis of some of the more typical and familiar religious attitudes may reveal facts of mental life that are more general than would at first be suspected. Most studies of Religion deal with the subject as something given—external, as it were—a thing of impersonal traditions, institutions, or metaphysical and supermundane realities. Religion is doubtless all of these. But they lie outside the scope of our present study. Our interest is confined to group behavior—in other words, to social psychology.

As students of social psychology we seek criteria which will enable us to know what we and our fellow beings are really doing when we think we are doing something different. We wish to learn which forms of behavior are adequate modes of adaptation to reality, and which are motivated by unconscious desires that are anti-social, or are designed to resolve conflicts that lie wholly within the psyche and have the primary function of defending our self-appreciations against our own impulses. Once psychology gives us such criteria it may

become a valuable guide in determining social policy, a "yes" and "no" saying science.

No one will seriously deny, I think, that religion has close psychological relations to social behavior. In fact, there is probably nothing in the whole range of human activity in which the determinants of social behavior may be so profitably studied as in religion. For these reasons we shall not seek to give a systematic psychological account of the whole of religious experience. This has several times been attempted, but without great success. We must confine our study to data which are most significant for our social interest, and are most familiar to persons brought up with more or less immediate acquaintance with Christianity.

The hidden motives back of religious behavior give rise to that sense of mystery which pervades religion everywhere. "The heart hath its reasons which the reason cannot understand." The tenacity with which the religious consciousness clings to its mystery, often in spite of patent and undeniable fact, is a universal testimony to the presence of the unconscious motivation to which I have referred. Sometimes the mystery appears as the occult,

as magic. Again as an esoteric truth known only to the initiated, or as "the inner light," immediate awareness of the ineffable. Often the mystery is "projected," objectified—that is, it appears to the consciousness of the believer not so much as his own mystery as the mystery of the universe or of the spiritual meaning of life.

So large does the mysterious loom in religious experience that it is sometimes regarded as a basic reality in religion. It is said to be that which distinguishes faith from reason. Even so rationalistic a writer as Herbert Spencer seemed to feel that he was giving philosophic validity to the fundamental truth of religion when he maintained the existence of the unknowable, the eternal absolute, and inscrutable cosmic mystery.

In very truth the cosmic mystery is ever about us. But I doubt if the mere philosophical fact that we do not and cannot know the ultimate is in itself enough to give rise to a religious appreciation of life. Certain religionists often resist the rational explanation of the forces of nature, not primarily because the mystery of nature is more precious in itself than natural forces understood and mastered, but rather be-

cause this mystery is somehow associated with their own unconscious wishes. Moreover, the so-called hostility of religion to science often has little, if anything, to do with the religious interest itself. The unctions of an established religion may be used merely as weapons by the ignorant multitude and their spokesmen in the age-long resistance of inert humanity to those readjustments which demand new intellectual effort. But the presence of the mystery seems to be an essential to faith, and the religious interest would preserve it at all costs wherever it is symbolic of the inner secret.

Here, I think, is where the older rationalist liberalism failed, through want of psychological insight and sympathy, in its criticism of religious dogma. It sought to deny the mystery, to substitute for it a rational formula. And here also would seem to be found a serious lack of understanding among many who seek to modernize religion—"bring it up to date";—they tend to reduce it to the merely ethical. Religion commonly borrows certain moral precepts in order that religious behavior may to that extent be oriented to social reality, and traditional and established religions are often associated with popular moral convention. But

religion itself as St. Paul knew, is not primarily a moral code. Neither are religious beliefs at bottom explanations of the origin and nature of the universe. They have another function.

The tendency has been too strong, especially on the part of thinkers who have grown up in Protestant communities and have been influenced by nineteenth-century natural science, to regard religion as an affair of ideas. Traditional beliefs, dogma, and myth, which have come down to us from an earlier time, and are of course out of harmony, when taken literally, with the naturalism of our age, are regarded by these thinkers as merely crude attempts at a rational explanation of nature and life, made by simple people who, alas! could not know as much about the world as we "scientific" moderns know.

Hence the effort is made to square these old beliefs with modern knowledge, to rationalize the myths, to eliminate miracles, to reconstruct, for instance, the legend of the Gospels with the technique of biblical criticism in order to find an historic Jesus whose biography will appear credible to college students trained in the biological laboratory and in the methods of historical research. Modern scholarship, in other

words, would simply batten down the hatch over the inner secret mysteries of religion and, dragging the spirit up to the bridge, offer it the glasses, compass, and navigation chart and bid its wish fancies be content with the clear, cold outlines of a dead level, naked, everyday reality.

But what if religion were originally fabricated, and its "mysteries" cherished generation after generation to be an *escape from the very reality* into which modernism would fain now confine the objects of religious interest!

One may discover this rationalistic tendency in practically the whole school of religious liberals from the time of the publication of the Wölfenbuttel papers down to the present time. On the whole, it is the same story; the mystery of the spirit is translated into the terminology of a mechanistic universe and the dynamics of the religious interest are explained in terms of a moral and social will which is characteristic of a democratic age.

There is, for instance, the "religion of humanity." When all else loses its prism colors, one can always fall back upon the adoration of the human race. Strauss and Comte were not the first nor by any means the last to do this.

If a young minister, imbued with the intellectualist spirit of to-day, with a smattering of science and a hazy idea of Darwinian evolution, finds himself unable to rationalize the gospel in terms of nineteenth-century science, it is unnecessary for him to delve into the inner meaning of that which motivates even himself. All he has to do is lay hold of the rigmarole ready made by the modern proletariat. He may, at any rate, preach the *"social gospel."* It is easy to transform the wish for a future world into a contemplation of the future of this world. To promise the downtrodden and unsuccessful compensation in an ideal co-operative commonwealth, to denounce "big business" in terms of the ethics of Jesus—the proletariat and *petite bourgeoisie* will perhaps like that and come to church—for a while. Such antipathy to the vulgar commercialism of industrial America is, moreover, often justified for reasons other than are written in the New Testament. One may be wholly "modern," therefore, in taking such an attitude and also feel that he is strictly "evangelical." He is certainly democratic; and even Nietzsche, enemy of all of them, said that sick people, women, democrats, socialists, and Christians had much in common.

But wholly aside from Nietzsche's cynicism, the "social gospel" would seem to be an obvious way of keeping up an evangelical message for those who find the old forms of belief inadequate, yet have not penetrated very deeply into the inner secrets of religion. And it is perhaps fortunate, from the sociological point of view, that unction is found, in the texts which most business men profess to believe, which may be used to curb the recalcitrant ones. Certainly the "social gospel," however much a product of our passing democracy, is well intended. And many religious liberals who have found the old dogma impossible and have not had the perspicacity to dig beneath it, have seen in such a message a way to be spiritually useful in their day and generation. It must also be said that the Hebraic element in Christianity has a note of social revolution in no uncertain degree. I will deal with this factor in a later chapter, having previously touched upon it in an earlier work.[1]

But it is open to question whether these social-religionists have accomplished much, either for biblical exegesis or for social science. Many are "innocent young men," unable to

[1] *The Behavior of Crowds,* Harper & Brothers.

understand or accept the hard facts of the lot of man on the earth. On the whole, I should say, well-meaning amateurs. It is doubtful if with all their zeal they have ever contributed anything of importance to the social problem. Even at best, on occasions when they seem to have been morally and perhaps economically correct, they would appear to be unable to carry their case in opposition to their adversaries. The reason is obvious: unfortunately their clientele and their financial support in this wicked world—a world into the terms of which they would carry the religious dream—is made up to a large extent of the very persons whose business interests are held up to criticism by the social evangel. Hard-fisted business men, who often know the battle of life first hand, are inclined to look upon social preachers as lacking in theoretical or practical knowledge of social and economic matters. They cannot understand why religious teachers do not "stick to the gospel and let business alone." And even with truth on their side, it is a question how far that truth is relevant to the Christian gospel, rightly understood. Also it is doubtful if this sort of social and economic rectification, valuable as it is in the real world of af-

fairs, is quite what the average believer—even he who hates the capitalist"—wants. It would seem that a religion which tries, however effectively, to deal with the affairs of "this world," is wanting to some degree in that escape from the dread realities of this same world—wanting in that "other worldliness"—which the religious interest demands. I doubt if the people who most need religion, whatever their economic condition or class, can be really satisfied with a "social gospel"—which at best would transform the "escape dream" into the class war of this present world.

Preachers of the "social gospel" are for the most part very inexpert in matters of sociology and economics, and in matters of religious feeling struggling humanity would seem to expect from them more than can be envisaged in any imaginary social reconstruction. Moreover the moment social reform is connected with religious prestige there is added an unctuous or partisan spirit, an air of finality, even to the most ill-advised popular movement. Preachers of the "social gospel," whether they realize the fact or not, are often hardly more than mouthpieces for present-day popular tendencies. Their oracular utterances

often add more heat than light to the discussion of sociological issues. Thus there is brought to the discussion of social problems an irrelevant attitude of "Thus saith the Lord," a spiritual dictatorialness, borrowed from the cathedra, which, rather than inviting intelligent investigation, tends to close debate and condemn on ancient moral authority all who differ from the pulpit utterances. The participation of the Protestant clergy in the matter of prohibition is a case in point. This is hardly the philosophic method or spirit with which to modernize religion.

No, the Christian gospel is different and more than this! The task of the student who would understand the inner mysteries of religion must lie along another course. We shall not seek an interpretation of religion that will furnish merely justification for reformism or for proletarian unrest. Our study must transcend the ephemeral social issues of to-day just as the religious interest has survived the passing *Zeitgeist* of many generations of "hot little men."

As we must, therefore, in the very interest of social psychology itself, pass by the present "social gospel," so, in fact, must we make allowances for these logical rationalizations of

the religious impulses which are characteristic of the intellectual spirit of our present mechanistic science.

The conflict between science and theology is not merely a struggle between two world views —an ancient and "superstitious" philosophy of nature and a modern and adequate approach to the facts of our world. At bottom the struggle is a conflict between different kinds of people. Doctor Jung, in his recently translated book *Psychological Types,* traces this conflict through the whole history of thought. Jung divides mankind into two main types, which he terms "introvert" and "extrovert." He says:

> "The names and forms in which the mechanism of introversion and extroversion has been conceived are extremely diverse, and are, as a rule, adapted only to the standpoint of the individual observer. Notwithstanding the diversity of the formulations, the common basis or fundamental idea shines constantly through; namely, in the one case an outward movement of interest toward the object, and in the other a movement of interest away from the object, toward the subject and

> his own psychological processes. . . . One could imagine the object to possess an extreme and even decisive significance for the subject. It might almost seem as though it were an absolute determination, a special purpose of life or fate that he should abandon himself wholly to the object." [1]

This writer's classification of humanity into these two types is not always simply and clearly stated. Most persons manifest tendencies in both directions, and certainly it would be incorrect to say that the so-called "introvert" is essentially religious, while the "extrovert" is by nature scientific. Yet there is a great difference in the way in which men seek security in the world. Some may feel at home in the universe only by taking refuge in a world of "inner and invisible" realities, or by shrouding the facts of nature with a superreality which is held to be congenial to man's deepest strivings and hopes. Other men throw themselves into the course of events, as it were. They seek security in understanding the facts of life, in knowing the best and the worst, and in preparing themselves to meet the master situations as they

[1] *Psychological Types,* p. 11.

arise. This latter type is less concerned about the inner mystery of life. Often it would persuade itself that there is no mystery. It delights in tracing casual connections among natural phenomena, in the classification of facts, in predicting future events according to exact formulæ, drawn from carefully studied experiments. It is, of course, from this latter type that scientists, naturalistic thinkers, and men of action—the "modern minds"—are largely drawn. But it must be said that persons so constituted have also frequently been great religious leaders. Our modern scientific view of the world is, therefore, chiefly the result of the thought of the empirical, fact-seeking type. Whether this type is actually more numerous than the opposite type is doubtful, but certainly it has found opportunity for expression in recent times in ways that were denied it before.

Prevalent as this scientific type is in our age, and vast and revolutionizing as has been its achievement in making over our practical life and our thinking, it is yet rather startling when we remember how small a portion of modern people have anything more than a passive part in the modernizing of our world. McDougall in his book *Is America Safe for Democracy?* calls

attention to the fact that our entire modern civilization is very new, that it demands a serious uprooting of old habits and traditions —a reorientation which the great majority perhaps cannot achieve. Men generally are to-day making practical use of the achievements of applied science. They repeat phrases and conclusions borrowed from the writings of a relatively small group of natural scientists. But it is a serious question how much the average newspaper-reading "man in the street" really grasps of all that has happened in the world of thought. We say "we" are an advanced age, possessing airplanes, wireless, telephones, antitoxins, and a philosophy of evolution, but has not science "sold" to the public its *products* rather than its *thought processes?* To possess and enter into an appreciation of the latter requires to-day long and arduous training; one must master a technique, he must have acquired habits of thought which are very different from those which characterize popular thinking on any subject.

Popular thinking, therefore, concerning any of the important things of life, tends toward "introversion." Hence the hold of old religious ideas and customs upon the masses. So

strong is this tendency that popular ideology remains much the same under various superficial differences of expression. Even if it were possible to convert the public to belief in the mechanistic universe of science the conversion would only be external and formal; the old mysteries and sanctities, and refuges, and taboos, and unctions, and dreads, and hopes, and consolations, would persist somehow, and we should find that a pseudo-scientific jargon would soon come into existence as an instrument for expressing and justifying the old religious attitudes. In fact, something like this commonly happens even now. It may be seen in attempts to reconcile science and faith; again, it is not infrequent among those new and so-called up-to-date religious movements and cults which thrive among the half-educated.

The older religious liberalism, in spite of its opposition to "orthodoxy," was often more concerned about saving the old values under new forms of expression than about attaining a fundamentally different attitude toward life. Even Colonel Ingersoll, with all his terrifying and militant "agnosticism," appears now a little like a sheep in wolf's clothing. I am convinced that the attempt to modernize old faith values,

giving them a painted-over appearance of scientific rationality, is on the whole an inconsequential procedure. It goes only skin deep. It does not help us to any valuable self-knowledge. It still conceives of the problem of religion as external, as a thing of tradition and of intellectual interest. It does not help us to see what is the inner interest and meaning of religious behavior.

Now whatever religion may be, it is only incidentally that it is a matter of opinion about subjects that might better be left to science. Whenever people discuss the question of religion as if were primarily the problem of the nature and process of Creation—for instance, whether Genesis or the Origin of Species gives us a correct account of the appearance of the varied forms of plant and animal life, or whether the protozoan process of parthenogenesis may explain also the story of the virgin birth of Christ—you may be sure that they have forgotten for the time what religion is really about. They are conceiving of a matter which is personal and psychological, a matter of motive and of self-appreciation, as if it were purely objective, an historical or biochemical question. Religion is not primarily something

which we are taught to believe about something not ourselves. It concerns our unrecognized yes and no, our personal reactions and subtlest motives, the emotional solution of the relations between the rating at which we would take ourselves and the realities to which we react. All our beliefs about the world we live in, so far as these beliefs concern religion, are but forms of expression of these emotional solutions.

The traditional forms have not only the advantage of long-standing habit; they are also, many of them, precisely those symbols which the human spirit growing up through successive generations of childhood experiences would be expected naturally to create for itself. Moreover, many of these forms of expression have an artistic value and beauty which is sadly lacking when one strives to translate their content into so-called scientific terms. What an emotional and æsthetic difference there is, for instance, between "Jerusalem, the Golden," and the New Jerusalem conceived of in terms of a Marxian co-operative commonwealth, or between "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world," and the meager historical and human Jesus of Nazareth who emerges from the elaborate technique of

New Testament criticism. These old symbols have the logic of the unconscious—of dreams —and of the elaboration of our deepest wishes. They show just that condensation and disguise —that evidence of latent hidden thought, half hinted at—which psychopathologists commonly find to be the language of the inner self of us all. Once we understand what it is that we are really trying to say through these religious forms of expression, it becomes unnecessary to "modernize" them. The reconciliation of religion and science, then, does not consist in substituting a new symbol language for that of tradition as an expression of the mysteries of our unconscious orientation to reality. It consists rather in learning what these religious phenomena may teach us about human nature.

From the standpoint of social psychology, religious liberalism may be regarded as in part an attempt of the educated mind to shake itself free from the limitations of popular control-ideas. Religion, Rousseau and others to the contrary notwithstanding, did not originate with a clever upper class. It is not, as some suppose, a cunning device imposed upon the credulous masses in order to control them and keep them down while a master class exploited

them. A religious system once elaborated may be used for police purposes. But as a mechanism for social control, religion, even in such cases, commonly represents a control that springs from the mass itself. And a careful study of religious history confirms the judgment that religion—speaking sociologically—comes from beneath, not from above. The most ardent and tenacious adherents of any religion are to be found in the vulgus. It was here that paganism lingered after the educated Roman world had discarded it. It was in the slum proletariat of the ancient Mediterrranean cities that Christianity had its origin. It is among the uneducated masses that Catholic Christianity takes its deepest roots. And among Protestants, whose modifications of Christian belief and practice are historically expressive of middle-class psychology—it will be noted that here, too, the most spontaneous and intense religious behavior—witness the revival and the fundamentalist movement—is to be found in those elements of the population which most persistently resist the spirit of urbanity and cosmopolitan culture.

In all times it appears there have been a few here and there who have achieved a mental

life of broader interests and deeper insight than that possessed by the mass. Whatever intellectual advance humanity has made, we owe to these "knowing ones," a large portion of whom have suffered persecution at the hands of the crowd for their deviation from popular forms of belief and spiritual control. In many times and places these knowing few have been obliged to deceive the multitude, to find freedom for themselves by dissembling, by keeping up an appearance of conformity to popular religion, while secretly interpreting their words and behavior differently among themselves. I believe that practically every great religion has had an esoteric intellectualism of this kind.

In our modern Western civilization, with its democratic tendencies and its practical use for certain forms of scientific knowledge, liberalism has been exoteric. The noncomformist has spoken openly. He has on the whole been glad to take as many of his fellows as were interested, into his confidence. There has, of course, been popular opposition to the liberal advance of science, and there still is. But such popular opposition has been greatly weakened, though among ourselves, as always, significant new

truths must still often win their way in the face of popular religious hostility.

The very democratic and exoteric nature of modern liberalism, the habitual attempt to popularize science, the openness of such conflict as there has been between science and religion, the repeated appeal to the reason of the man in the street, together with assurances that scientific progress is to his advantage—all this has tended in a way to bring an element of crowd-mindedness into our thinking about the religious significance of scientific culture. It accounts in some measure for the partisan spirit which often manifests itself among religious liberals, also for the attempt to restate old popular religious values in the terminology of science. And finally it would seem that this is why we Westerners have been so slow in turning our attention to the possibility that the whole language of religion may be pure symbolism—symbolism fabricated by the unconscious to express its wish fancies. Doubtless an esoteric liberalism would at once have made this latter approach to the problem—would have treated religious forms as figures of speech and would have sought to penetrate to a knowledge of the mysteries, the secrets. Study of religious history

would strongly suggest that this course has often been followed, and that the mysteries of religion are secrets chiefly to the uninitiated mass.

## II

### *Modes of Religious Thinking*

OUR discussion so far has proceeded upon the assumption that the mysteries of religion are facts which we must take into account if we are to understand our subject. Furthermore, I have suggested that these mysteries are—for purposes of our study, at least—to be regarded as secrets of some sort, half-conscious impulses and inner turnings of the psyche which are for the most part hidden from the full knowledge of the believer. I have expressed the belief that in certain esoteric circles it may all along have been the practice of the "initiated" to explore these inner realities, to seek such self-knowledge as would give to commonly accepted religious ideas and customs meanings which were hidden from the eyes of the populace.

Suppose I am correct in this latter assumption, or "suspicion," if you will—suppose, to bring the discussion home to us, that Chris-

tianity has and has had from the beginning such an esoteric meaning. Suppose that the Christian tradition and ceremonies constitute a very carefully elaborated system worked out by successive generations of the most subtle and penetrating minds of the ancient world; suppose that every element in this great religious system is susceptible of more than one interpretation—that, like the ritual of certain secret societies, it all has one obvious meaning for the layman and another and quite different meaning for the inner group who have "attained wisdom."

There are many indications that such may be the case. I will dwell on this fact in a later chapter. If such a supposition is correct, it follows that all attempts to explain, to attack or defend Christianity which take its forms of expression at their face value are quite irrelevant. I do not see how anyone can study the literature of the Apostolic Age and not feel that he is walking over subtly spanned chasms, treading the surface of a deep, dark wisdom which may penetrate to the very depths of human life. And there are moderns who think that the four Gospels are naïve documents written by simple-minded Galilean working-

men! I wonder with what interest one must have read the history of the first and second Christian centuries to gain such an impression.

This is not to say that we shall now be able to rediscover any of these secret "spiritual" interpretations of early Christianity. Neither is it likely that, if we should uncover such bits of ancient wisdom, we should find them very valuable for our present study. My point is that there are indications of the fact that from the beginning it has been recognized that the real meaning of religious ideas—Christian as well as others—*lies below the surface.*

Now, after all I have said about the "mysteries" of religion, it may appear at first that I propose to take away with one hand what I lay down with the other. In other words, in suggesting that we may be able to throw some light upon these inner impulses which will lead us to a better understanding of human behavior in general, are we not thus presuming to do the very thing which we have only a moment ago said that naturalistic science could not succeed in doing—namely, to do away with the mysteries altogether? Do we not necessarily, then, assume that these secrets are wholly human in their origin and nature—that they lie

within the realm of the activity of living organisms? And in suggesting that they may be so approached through a strictly "natural history" point of view, have we not ourselves taken sides with rationalistic scientists right at the start? Have we not assumed that there is, after all, nothing "supernatural" about these unseen realities, and that in spite of the age-old testimony of religionists to the contrary?

To some extent I think this is a fair question. It stands to reason that in so far as we attempt to reach any understanding of religion at all, we must seek to bring its facts within the radius of the known. And we must proceed to do this notwithstanding the fact that religious experience, like the emotional life generally, as James said, resists analysis. In so far as an experience is our own, a moment through which we are actually living, it is unique; it possesses a warmth and glow for which there is no intellectual equivalent. And in contrast with such life and activity, even the most sympathetic reduction of the personal and feeling life to those classifications and formulæ which the intellect may grasp, appears cold and ruthless.

This criticism is, I think, only in part justi-

fied when it is remembered that we are not attempting to reduce the whole of religion to formula. We are interested in religion only in so far as it happens to be a type of experience—a reaction to stimulus. As such it properly lies within the scope of psychology. But we must remember that there are other aspects of our subject, metaphysical, historical, and institutional, and that in these respects its realities lie outside the range of our study. Also it should be said that none of our logical and scientific formulas are equivalents of the realities which they represent. Intellect is not a mirror in which reality is passively copied and reflected. It is at most an instrument for living and acting. The systems into which it works up the stream of experience are purely artificial human contrivances made for the sake of more adequate behavior. They by no means exhaust the possibilities of the real.

Science is at best only one of various possible views of the real, and can, therefore, never be coextensive with it. I am quite prepared to say that all through and all around our ordered universe of science is the extra-rational. Moreover, there would seem to be little danger—if danger it be—that science will ever

succeed in reducing an unfinished evolutionary process to system. In a very true sense both religious and scientific ideas are fictions and symbols. We shall have more to say about religious symbols later. As to scientific ideas, their symbolic nature is recognizable when we remember that the "laws" and class concepts of science are really "shorthand" devices, signs by which we are able to indicate that a group of phenomena are similar in a certain respect. Also it will be remembered that even number and measurement which give to every science its exactness are really human abstractions.

Our thinking, as William James showed, depends upon the fact that we are interested, active spectators in the "game." Thinking is for the sake of doing. To think at all is to ignore some aspects of things, and to emphasize only those qualities and attributes which are relevant to our purposes. Hence thinking is essentially "partial." To a mind which was wholly impartial everything would be just as relevant and important as everything else. As nothing and no aspect of anything could for a purpose be ignored, everything would be equally important at all times. Hence nothing would ever stand out as having any

particular importance. In a world in which there was nothing of special importance, it is hard to see how anything could have meaning, or how fancies and illusions could be distinguished from fact. In a word, even our criteria of the real rest at last upon the fact that thinking is dominated by interest and practical necessity. As intellect, then, is not a copying device, we may say that its judgments are like the work of erecting signposts which point out the places which have significance to beings endowed with such general interests as we humans possess. So we return to the statement that scientific ideas are symbols, and I trust that this statement will be kept in mind when later we deal at some length with the symbolic significance also of religious ideas.

As all our thinking is symbolic, the so-called conflict of religion and science comes down to a question of what sort of symbols we should use to express certain interests, or to attain certain ends. Perhaps I can make this matter more clear by the use of a familiar illustration. We have two commonly accepted symbols of the United States of America—the map and the flag. Each of these may be used to represent the country, to bring its reality to

our minds. Each is a humanity-created device the use of which makes it easy for us to conceive in some way of the reality for which it stands, and to behave in a certain way toward that reality. Yet neither *is* that reality, nor in fact at all like it.

The map, of course, more closely resembles the country than the flag, if we think only of the general geographic outlines; but the resemblance is so small that we may say the map is not like the country at all. Mountains and rivers and cities and coast lines are represented by systems of mere dots and conventional lines. Political realities and divisions are represented by arbitrary color schemes. In fact, the map serves only as a sort of signpost indicating distance and direction, and that is about all. The map is what I would call a *utilitarian symbol.* Its use is to enable us to know where we are, to guide our movements and so assist us in dealing with certain spatial relations. In other words, by the use of the map, we are able to *orient ourselves practically* to the reality which we call the United States of America.

Yet the map does not represent the country any more truly than does the flag. The latter symbol—and none will deny that it is a symbol

—stands for certain emotions and ideals. It is in these respects—and very real they are, too—that the flag means America to us. It is this America which inspires men's devotion and their pride in the country. Men feel that the flag is sacred because it symbolizes something invisible which is yet the most significant reality that as Americans we have. The flag *orients* us *emotionally* to America. Both these symbols stand for the same America, yet they represent very different interests, and have different uses. The map might be termed the "scientific" symbol, and the flag the "religious" symbol. The map is an instrument of those adaptations to reality which consist of external movements, going to certain places, shipping materials, sending messages, etc. The flag stands for those forms of adaptation which emanate from within. Here, too, there is overt behavior, but it is, or should be, behavior dominated by unseen values, rather than by objective considerations. Of course there are in actual practice many instances in which these lines of distinction which I have tried to draw are blurred, and many use the flag for purely material interests. But in such cases we feel that the use is unwarranted and ungenuine.

The distinction between the function of these symbols nevertheless holds.

Now the America for which the flag symbol stands is no less the real America, though it exists wholly within experience. The kind of reality for which the flag stands can never be quite expressed in logical terms. There are emotional elements in it which transcend the full consciousness of the patriot, which may compel him to action and by their success or failure may greatly modify his sense of the meaning and value of his life. We find something similar to this in art and music and in love—where also adequate self-expression commonly makes use of the language of symbol—and most of all in religion.

The use of the two symbols the map and the flag, in order to approach in different ways the same reality, has its analogy in much of our behavior toward all sorts of situations and indicates a very important psychological fact—that we have two ways of thinking. The first process of thinking, that which corresponds to science and the map, we may name "directed" thinking, and the second, that symbolized by the flag, "free association." Directed thinking, as Dewey has shown, is mainly con-

cerned with solving problems. Its task is to find the unknown means to a desired end—to enable us to intervene in the course of events, with foreknowledge of the future so that a desired result may follow our action. This is intelligence; it is achieved, as James said, by holding in attention the relevant and ignoring the rest. It has to do primarily with environmental situations, with successfully dealing with objective realities; though it by no means eliminates the purely theoretical. All theory, if it means anything at all, implies that either remotely or immediately there is something to take into account in behavior. Even in this kind of thinking—as Havelock Ellis, following James and others, has shown, there are often determining elements which unconsciously emanate from temperament and bring thinking into closer touch with creative art, than many rationalists suppose.

Nevertheless, in directed thinking the mind —however symbolic the instruments it uses— is dealing primarily with the facts and principles and interrelations of a world of objective realities. It has been shown that even mathematics, the most abstract and purely formal of

all thinking, lies within this realm. Let us say, then, that directed thinking is primarily concerned with the tasks of relating the organism to its objective world; it is purposive.

Free association is chiefly concerned with inner wishes. The problems it would solve are primarily within us. It seeks to solve conflicts which emanate from the emotional and impulsive life itself. It is not a function of active adjustment to a world of objects, but is rather expressive of wishes and longings which are not satisfied by ordinary environmental situations. Many times these wishes are so disguised and their expression is so highly symbolic that the wisher himself does not recognize their import. In recent times psychopathology, through the illuminating discoveries of Freud and his followers, has developed a technique which throws much light upon the meaning of the thinking which we call free association. It is impossible for us in this limited study to enter into a discussion of the analytical psychology. It is enough to refer the reader to the writings of Freud, Brill, Alfred Adler, Otto Rank, William White, and other special workers in the field.

That the fabrications of free associative thinking are not just wild undetermined fancies and vagaries, but have definite and profound meaning, is now pretty well established, and the discovery of the fact is beginning to throw new and very helpful light on all the sciences of human behavior—not the least the study of religion. Free association is familiar to us all—we have but to "relax our attention" to objective realities, as Bergson tells us, to slip into daydreams or sleep and actual dreaming. Then it is no longer considerations of the environment that determine our thought, but the desires of the psyche itself. In the realm of free association belong poetry, art, dreams, and also many types of thought and behavior which must be classed as pathological.

Now it can hardly be denied that much of the religious thought and behavior belongs to the region which includes art and music. Havelock Ellis maintains, and he is by no means the first, that religion is essentially art. Certainly the historic association of religion with art is interesting in this connection. Ellis further argues that the beginning of ritual—in fact, the early expressions of religion generally—

must be found in the dance. He says in *The Dance of Life:*

> "All religions, and not merely those of primitive character, have been at the outset, and sometimes throughout, in some measure saltatory. That was recognized even in the ancient world by acute observers, like Lucian, who remarks in his essay on dancing that "you cannot find a single ancient mystery in which there is no dancing; in fact, most people say of the devotees of the Mysteries that "they dance them out." This is so all over the world. It is not more pronounced in early Christianity, and among the ancient Hebrews who danced before the Ark, than among the Australian aborigines whose great corroborees are religious dances conducted by the medicine men with their sacred staves in their hands. Every American Indian tribe seems to have had its own religious dances, varied and elaborate, often with a richness of meaning which the patient study of modern investigators has but slowly revealed. . . . The dance thus becomes the presentation of a divine drama, the vital re-enactment

> of a sacred history, in which the worshipper is enabled to play a real part. In this way ritual arises. . . . What by some is considered to be the earliest known Christian ritual—the "Hymn of Jesus" assigned to the second century—is nothing but a sacred dance. Eusebius in the third century stated that Philo's description of the worship of the Therapeuts agreed at all points with Christian custom, and that meant the prominence of dancing, to which, indeed, Eusebius often refers in connection with Christian worship. . . . It is certain that at the Eucharist the faithful gesticulated with their hands, danced with their feet, flung their bodies about. Chrysostom, who referred to this behavior round the Holy Table at Antioch, only objected to drunken excesses in connection with it; the custom itself he evidently regarded as traditional and right." [1]

It is hardly our aim to emphasize the historic relation between religious behavior and dancing. Religion has likewise made use of painting, sculpture, poetry, song, and architecture and fiction as forms in which to express its

[1] *The Dance of Life*, pp. 40-42.

feelings and ideals. But the painting and dancing, the pantomime and sculpture, are generally understood to be symbols—figurative expressions of the psychic life of man. But when people think of the written word the case, for some strange reason, seems to be different. Poetic conceptions of history and the cosmos, folk legends and hero tales, myths, and wonder stories, the fantasies of supernatural beings, and of demons and heavenly things, abound in the literature of all religions. What is the basic difference between these "dances of the mind" and other forms of religious art?

Is not literature as truly art as dancing or singing? And why must students of religion take these written symbols literally and assume that the truth of religion depends, let us say, for instance, upon the question as to whether certain alleged historical events really happened? The truth of religion must be sought in a psychological valuation of religious experiences.

Our suggestion that religion may be classed with art and dreams and with other types of mental life which emanate from the unconscious indicates the method of psychological

study which ought to lead us most successfully to an understanding of our subject.

Psychological studies of religion have often been made. But the method commonly used has necessarily confined the discussion to that which appears in consciousness, or may be observed in the overt behavior of the devotee. A good example of the latter method is Ames's *Psychology of Religious Experience,* in which the author seeks to explain religious behavior as a manifestation of the instincts. He does not argue, as older writers have done, that there is a definitely religious instinct as such, but finds the source of religion in hunger, sex, the instincts of self-preservation, and gregariousness.

There has in recent years been much discussion of instinct, especially in social psychology, and it is very doubtful if the concept of instinct so used will stand careful analysis. It is very easy for writers to assume a general innate tendency, and then read into it an "explanation" of certain types of behavior. The most clear-cut and useful view of instinct would seem to be Watson's. This writer defines instinct as an inherited mode of response of the pattern-reaction type. Such a view would exclude from

instinct all that has been acquired by learning, also those "conditioned" reflexes by which traditionally certain emotional responses have come to be associated with various instinctive reactions. Watson's method of observing carefully the behavior of babies to see just what modes of response are actually inherited, and when the learning process begins, clears up the subject of instinct and does away with much confusion. I do not believe that anyone has observed a child modifying the inherited patterns of hunger, sex, or gregariousness in ways that may be called religious, in cases where it could be shown that the child had not learned to do so. Consequently the attempt to explain religion as a matter of instinct would appear to be based upon a very hazy notion of what instinct is. If religious practices are commonly acquired by learning, and religious beliefs are fabricated for purposes of security, defense, escape, and consolation during the growing years of childhood and after, we are obliged to seek the explanation elsewhere than in those hereditary pattern-reactions which we term instinctive.

Psychologists to-day are somewhat divided over the problem of the relative merits of the

introspective and the behaviorist methods. Introspection undoubtedly has wider scope than the behaviorist method of careful objective study of the responses of a subject during controlled laboratory experiment. But while the behaviorist method has the advantages of exactness and of being a method which any trained observer may duplicate in order to test and check up its results, it necessarily excludes from psychology much data that we have long felt to be of genuine psychological interest. A strictly behaviorist study of religion would doubtless give us a very accurate description of certain modes of religious conduct, and would seek to discover to what situations these religious responses were made. But beyond that we should gain little insight into the question why the subject happened to respond in such a manner. We should still find that the motives lying behind religious behavior were secrets. Watson says that in order to understand some forms of behavior it is necessary to know a person's whole past. I take this to be a correct statement of the limitations of the behaviorist method, so far as the psychology of religion is concerned.

An example of the introspective method may

be found in that section of Höffding's *Philosophy of Religion* which deals with religion as a psychological problem. This author derives religion from faith in the conservation of value. He seems to deal primarily with the conscious aspects of religion, and again the introspective method is here, as elsewhere, open to attack on the ground that while its findings may be true for the observer himself, there is no evidence that another observer occupied with his own consciousness would reach the same conclusion.

A third method, and the one we shall follow, is that of psychopathology. This method is primarily concerned with the study of abnormal types of behavior, but it throws much light upon the psychic life of normal people. There need be nothing startling in the proposal to study religion as a psychopathic phenomenon. Starbuck and James carried the study into this field years ago, although their work was done before general psychology possessed the analytic method of Freud. James, however, in *The Varieties of Religious Experience,* raised the question how far religion may be of pathological nature. Freud has given us a psychopathological account of the origin of certain religious practices—notably the sacrifice—in his

book, *Totem and Taboo.* Jung made excellent use of the psychoanalytical method in his book, *The Psychology of the Unconscious,* while Otto Rank has used this method with illuminating results in his study of myths. Properly this method should be employed through a religious clinic, in which persons manifesting various types of religious experience could be submitted to thorough analysis. Those religious institutions in which psychopathology is now being used for curing certain nervous disorders have an opportunity to make such a study. But at present we must for the most part *reason by analogy.*

Psychopathology has now made pretty clear the meaning and cause of certain types of dreams and of abnormal behavior. It is possible for us to draw upon some of these principles to throw light on the religious motives. There are some forms of religious behavior which show striking likeness to those mental phenomena which psychopathologists have succeeded best in understanding. In using this material and in pointing out its close analogy with certain phases of religion, we should, however, be on our guard. All argument from analogy has its necessary limitations. And

while with this method we may not reach conclusions which are absolutely proved, we may nevertheless be able to restate the psychological problem of religion by the formulation of hypotheses which are more fruitful than those we have yet possessed. Moreover, psychoanalysis has frequently come to grief at the hands of those who would make a fad of it. We shall, therefore, make use of only those principles which are pretty widely accepted.

There are many aspects of religion in which one familiar with psychopathology at once finds himself among facts which strangely resemble data which he deals with every day. There is, for instance, what is known as "regression," a survival in adult life of infantile emotional interests, and the return to this infantile ego is found to manifest itself in various abnormal mental phenomena. The literature of psychopathology commonly deals with the significance of this belated infantilism. It is noteworthy, then, to find a similar strain in the literature of religion. There are many such passages as, "Ye must be born again." "Except as one becomes as a little child, he cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven." Again the believers are told that they are babes in Christ and are fed

on the milk of the Word. They are taught to say "Our Father" in their prayers. They are assured that they are children of God.

One is strongly tempted to study the analogy of this phase of religion, to learn if the likeness be merely accidental or if the impulse to be a child again may possibly play a determining part in religious behavior, just as in other ways it motivates actions which have been the subject of clinical study. Again, the family image plays an important part in abnormal psychology —just as it does in social psychology. There are many adults who seem to be able to adjust their emotional life to the tasks of the environment only by conceiving of social and even cosmic situations, as if they were still in the family circle. Often this image is associated with early experiences and impulses which cause the behavior of the patient to be seriously out of harmony with the action required of him. It is interesting, then, to see the strength of the family image in religious circles. The church is conceived of as Mother; repentance as return to the Father's house, the believers are "brethren." Is it not likely that the retention of the family image as a religious symbol may be a manifestation of the same psychic mech-

anisms that lead to its retention in other relations?

A universal characteristic of religious behavior is its ceremonialism. Certain ritualistic forms are gone through in a prescribed and regular way. Gestures must be made and words repeated on various occasions, or the believer is uncomfortable. Again, there are those who make the performance of such regulated behavior their chief aim in life, devoting themselves to it almost as if it were an end in itself. And besides this, there are many abstinences, taboos, and prohibitions the meaning of which is not clearly understood by those who practice them, and which are certainly often not in accord with biographical or even normal social needs. These are commonplace phenomena to the psychopathologist. Yet there are religious persons who would feel themselves personally defiled and "unclean"—until the taint were removed by some cleansing ceremony—should they even by chance and quite innocently touch a forbidden object, or violate one of these taboos.

Now such forms of compulsive behavior, together with ceremonies and taboos which are strikingly similar to those of religion, are often

characteristic of neurotics, and it is frequently the task of psychopathologists to discover the unconscious causes of such behavior. Is it possible that causes of similar nature may also be at the bottom of religious ceremonialism?

As with compulsive behavior so with compulsive thinking. Normal people often have the experience of having a song or line of poetry continuously running through their minds for days. The words repeated inaudibly again and again may be pure nonsense or even unpleasant, and it may be impossible to understand "why that thing keeps running through our heads"—yet the thing seems to go on for a time of its own accord. I have known people also to count inaudibly or to spell until they were very much annoyed, yet be unable to stop. Such ideas are known as obsessions and obsessions may be very serious—often delusions—yet the person holding them be unable to stop thinking them. There are many unfortunate persons who cannot get certain ideas out of their minds even though they know them to be foolish and untrue.

Psychopathologists very often have to deal with people whose thinking is thus "compulsive." And when analysis is possible, it is

usually found that such persistent ideas are associated with some unconscious impulse. It is characteristic of all compulsive thinking that it is not the outgrowth of conscious reasoning and cannot be modified by evidence. Persons whose thinking is compulsive often seek to "rationalize" it—that is, they resort to ingenious devices to render it plausible or to explain away that which would contradict it.

This sort of thinking, as I have tried to show, is a common characteristic of the crowd mind. The thinking of the crowd is dogmatic as a result of causes which are similar to those which render compulsive that of certain neurotics.

And dogma is a common element in religion. Here, too, beliefs are often held which are not the fruit of investigation, and cannot be changed by evidence. People seldom modify their religious convictions as a result of appeal to their reason. A college professor who was also deeply religious once talked over with me a scientific theory concerning the subject in which he was especially trained. He said: "Yes, with my intellect I believe this theory; it is supported both by the facts and by logic. But with my heart I just can't accept it or teach it to my students." The case is rather

extreme to be typical, but it illustrates a very common religious habit. Religious people, like many others, hold certain beliefs because they are compelled to do so by forces operating unconsciously.

Psychopathologists sometimes have to deal with persons who either overtly or unconsciously manifest certain perverse tendencies such as masochism—sexual enjoyment in various forms of self-torture, or sadism—delight in sexual cruelty. The manifestations of these tendencies are well known and the symptoms usually can be trace back to childhood.

Religionists have been known at times to carry certain practices to such extreme lengths that these perverse tendencies have become quite obvious. Self-torture and humiliation are not uncommon among religious ascetics, many of whom have reached a state of ecstacy through such practices. Cults, Christian and heathen, exist in which the practice of self-flagellation is common.

And as to delight in cruelty, that also may be manifest in religion. It is said that there is no hatred more inexorable than the *odium theologicum*. Certainly religious groups will on occasion persecute. Christians, with all their

gospel of love, have done it. Blood appears in many sacrificial and ritual customs. In general among crowds there can be little doubt that cruelty is enjoyed. Is it not possible that there may be factors of cruelty and self-humiliation in human nature which seek outlet through expressing themselves in religious forms? Certain elements in religious behavior would be difficult to explain on any other hypothesis.

To conclude this not altogether pleasing analogy, psychopathology has something to tell us about a mental phenomenon which is shared by normal persons and neurotics, though in different degree and with varying manifestations and attempts at compensation. I refer to the feeling of inferiority. Doctor Alfred Adler in *The Neurotic Constitution* traces through many phases of this feeling. We shall have something to say about it later. It is a factor in much crowd behavior, where the protest against it appears in consciousness as self-laudation of the group, a trait which crowds have in common with paranoia and other forms of mental disease. Much of the thinking and action of people normal as well as abnormal, revolves about this unconscious feeling of inferiority, and is designed to defend the ego

against it. Acquaintance with some of these phenomena strongly suggests certain elements common to religion, and especially what I take to be the very central transaction of all religious activity—redemption from sin.

The fact that certain human traits appear to be common to religion and to the data of psychopathology does not at all imply that religion is itself abnormal in human experience. A criterion of mental abnormality is inability to adjust oneself to the environment, chiefly to social situations. But religion is itself a social phenomenon; it is a community affair. In the religious community the acceptance of popular beliefs and participation in religious practices, even those which to moderns appear morbid and "heathenish," may from one point of view be quite normal behavior.

Our discussion has, however, brought us to the following hypothesis; I put it in the form of a question—*Is it not possible that those unconscious psychic mechanisms, which among unadjusted persons find expression in the neuroses, do under other circumstances appear as religious behavior?* Religion would appear from this point of view to be a sort of *benef-*

*icent psychosis,* or perhaps a socially acceptable substitute.

As experience, religion is the unique secret of the individual. As behavior, it may be regarded, like the behavior of crowds, as an unconsciously motivated modification of the social environment which permits the escape of repressed wishes. And just as psychological analyses, by bringing these unconscious impulses into the sphere of self-knowledge, may aid the neurotic patient to better, more adequate social adjustment, or liberate one from the automatism of his crowd, it is conceivable that similar self-knowledge concerning the determinants of religion should be conducive to social advance. It should tend to make the forms of social behavior more deliberate and adequate responses to mutual needs and to natural situations. Thus our method, instead of creating antagonism between the religious interest and the demands of the intellect—as much of the older Liberalism did—enables one to be religious and rational at the same time. Religion is not destroyed by being made conscious; it merely approaches art. And the artist does not cease to be artistic when

he learns the meaning of the symbols he is using. In no human activity can men be the worse for knowing the meaning of their conduct.

## III

### *Religion Speaks in Symbols*

IN the previous chapter we used an illustration concerning which something further should be said. In discussing the fact that there are two distinct processes of thinking, each of which is carried on in symbols, I said that these contrasting types of symbolism were well represented by the map and the flag. Religious ideas are in a sense flags. It is often difficult for people to accept the fact that religious ideas are not maps. Many at first are confused and feel as if there were "nothing to tie to" when they strive to conceive the doctrines of faith, not as guides through a world of spiritual perils, but merely as useful fictions. The word "fictions" startles us until we remember that maps also are useful fictions. The difference between the flag and the map is not that one is a fiction and the other not. The difference is wholly in the use for which they are designed.

Nevertheless, an army in a strange country, with all its flags flying, may be lost and perish without a map. And the human spirit, not content with our scientific and philosophical maps of reality, seems to desire a map of the "spiritual" universe which it has through its symbols externalized. Hence the tendency to turn and strive to use the value-symbols of religion as if they were charts. No such tendency appears in art because, while the artist also externalizes his dream fancies, he does so by modifying and creating through bodily effort certain concrete objects. He does not strive to substitute in fancy his dream world for the world of objective reality.

Religion, however, "denies the world"; it creates a new "spiritual" order of life, and, having done so, would equip itself with a diagram of the new world which it has itself created.

The new spiritual order which the religious mind fabricates includes much more than the dream of a world after death. It gives a perspective in which the whole significance of nature and life is changed. All creation may be viewed as a staging of a drama of salvation. All the factors of the environment, real or

fancied, may be looked upon as mere aids or hindrances to the interest of the believer's ego —that is, to his soul's salvation. Once such an approach to reality is made, the religious system becomes a sort of *house of refuge* from the natural. And as is often the case, when the human spirit takes refuge in an imaginary reality which is more congenial to it than this "partially hospitable" world of common experience, the reason elaborates the escape mechanisms into a logical system and seeks to substitute that system for the reality empirically known. The doctrinal systems of religion may, or may not have ontological validity. Faith and "revelation" may or may not give the true vision of a spiritual order which transcends the knowledge of the "natural man." To enter into discussion of this point would lead us into the region of metaphysical and epistemological thinking, and we have chosen to confine ourselves as closely as possible to the scope of psychology.

To the student of psychology the elaboration of useful fictions into alleged charts of the real is by no means confined to religion. Even scientists sometimes look upon their methodological concepts as if they were ontological.

The crowd has the habit of translating its fictions and wish fancies into dogma, and the classic example of this trait—an example in which what is an element in the reasoning of us all becomes pathological through exaggeration—may be seen in the disease known as paranoia.

The paranoic patient like the religious believer, manifests a symptom which the physicians speak of as "delusion of reference"—that is, he refers everything said or done in his environment to himself as having some special benign or malignant purport. Perhaps the likeness here is due to the intense preoccupation with the interests of the ego which is common to paranoia and to religion, Christianity especially. In paranoia also this delusion of reference is often accompanied by another symptom, the fabrication of an imaginary system of reality in which of course the ego interests of the patient have an importance and a degree of security not otherwise possible. This system-making sometimes leads such patients to construct very ingenious charts and diagrams. Thus the flag symbol and the map are merged. We should expect this confusion of symbols to take place to just the degree that

the reason is enlisted in the service of the wish fancies of the ego—when it seeks to externalize and "rationalize" the needs of the unconscious, instead of seeking to understand the self—or to guide the organism toward practical adaptation to its environment.

The merging of symbols in religion, in part grows out of the very religious needs themselves. Commonly we do not very well understand ourselves, our ordinary consciousness is but the sharp edge of our thinking—the line of incision into environmental situations. To change the metaphor, back of the narrow coast line of conscious thinking lies the "hinterland" of the psychic life, for the most part an unexplored region of reverie and unrecognized emotional interest, where wild creatures haunt deep, dark ravines and even civilized man still walks an aborigine and a naked child.

And our world, too, is, with all our science, something of a wilderness, filled with riddles that defy our deepest wisdom and with dangers and unforeseeables that perplex and terrify us. It is not surprising, then, that, confronted as we are by the unknown within and without, we should in our efforts to achieve an ordered personal existence strive to conceive of the

order of nature in terms of an order of our own which is most congenial to our deepest desires.

Thus it will be seen that our analogy of the map and the flag is too simple an illustration. We must take into account the fact that religious thinking blurs the distinction between these symbols. In the case of the nation there is little or no conflict between the facts indicated on the map and the feelings expressed by the flag. Geographical knowledge, instead of causing the patriotic sentiments to shrink, rather strengthens them. It provides them with an object and sphere of operation. Scientific maps of nature are not always so friendly to the religious sentiments. They do not so easily coincide with our feelings of pride and security. Sometimes science makes statements of facts about nature which are so hostile to the interests of the self that religion inevitably protests. The protest is less against science—though it appears at first to be so—than against the facts of nature itself.

In one sense, religion is a triumph of faith over pessimism. I believe this pessimism, even defeatism, is always at least unconsciously recognized by profoundly religious persons. Does

not Christianity start with the doctrine that this is a lost world, redemption from which is promised through grace? Recognized though this defeatism may be, it is not accepted. Consequently, the religious mind regards with suspicion the humanist doctrine that faith values are of human origin and that religious beliefs are but symbolic expressions of these values. In the first place, the humanist point of view seems to be too optimistic; it would imply that human nature, through its religious forms of self-expression, is able to save itself. And second, the suggestion that religious values and beliefs are of human origin tends to throw the believer back upon the original pessimism against which his religious system is a form of protest.

Thus we see that the religious impulse works up the symbolic expressions of itself into systems which then take on the semblance of external reality. Freud has shown how dream fancies are also elaborated. Later we shall have occasion to make comparison of the fabrication of dreams with the "rationalization" of religious thought. In the *Interpretation of Dreams*. Freud has a very interesting and instructive chapter upon thinking in dreams. It

is sufficient at present to note that Freud's thesis is that dream thinking is essentially symbolic. So also is religious thinking, and so important is this fact that I wish to enter into a somewhat detailed discussion of the matter. We have in the first chapter tried to make it clear that all our thinking is carried on in symbols. The reader, however, may not yet be prepared to accept the full significance of this statement in so far as it applies to religious thought.

A number of religious ideas will at once come to mind which at first do not seem to be symbolic at all. Therefore, I will state the case without qualification, and then we shall see what evidence there is to support it. *All ideas, in so far as they have religious significance, are figures of speech.* They are either directly symbols of unconscious impulses, or are rationalizations of such symbols—secondary elaborations fabricated in order to make the religious symbol acceptable to the consciousness of the believer. Ideas of the first type are the direct and immediate expressions of religious experience, and are basic. Those of the second type are the useful fictions which serve to work up the primary symbols into creeds and theological

systems. Such systems in their entirety are just as symbolic—as truly a philosophy of "as if"—as are their several parts.

Religious people make no secret of the fact that *many* of their ideas and practices are symbols. This fact is recognized even by the multitude, who always give their cultural traditions a more literal interpretation than is given them by the initiated. Yet even the popular customs of pagans must have been pretty generally understood to be symbols. The ceremonies and dances which everywhere took place on feast days could hardly have been understood otherwise. There was, for instance, the goat song, used in the cult of Dionysius. It is significant that this religious ceremony developed into a form of pure dramatic art—the very word "tragedy" means goat song. There can be little doubt that the idols of the ancients were, except among the very most ignorant, known to be mere images—not identical with the gods themselves. Myths, too—if we take into account the great variations through which the same stories passed—must have been accepted in much the same way that we accept them now, as forms of art. Certainly Plato, who takes it for granted that myths belong to

the realm of poetry, so regarded them. The Christmas tree, and other elements of paganism which survived among Christians, could hardly have been preserved had they not been popularly recognized as symbolic; and so closely related is the meaning of some of these things to the unconscious erotic impulses that they would in all probability have been discontinued had their language been less figurative. Various writers have given us illuminating studies of the phallic symbols which abound in all religion. Jung, Brill, and Ellis find elements of this even in the Trinity. To give an account of erotic symbols as they occur in the decorations and even the architectural designs of temples and churches, in clerical vestments, and in gestures and postures which are almost universal in worship, is a task which would lead us too far afield. There is an extensive literature dealing with this subject to the existence of which I call attention only to indicate the fact that the symbolic nature of religious forms has always been, to some extent at least, known by believers themselves.

There are, moreover, generally recognized symbolic elements in Jewish and Christian tradition. Much of the language of the Bible has al-

ways been interpreted symbolically. The "Song of Songs" was so interpreted by the editors of the King James version of the Old Testament. Jesus is said to have spoken in parables. The language of the Fourth Gospel is very figurative. Christ is the Light of the World, the Lamb of God, the Bread of Life, the Vine. His gospel is the water of life. Each of these symbolic ideas is fixed in the mind of the reader of that document by means of a story in which one of these symbolic concepts is made the theme—the restoring sight to the blind, the feeding of the multitude, the conversation with the woman at the well, the miracle of turning water into wine at the marriage feast, etc.

We are told again that the biblical literature must, in large measure, at least, be understood as figure of speech and not literally—for "the letter killeth." St. Paul on the one occasion goes so far as to say even of Christ, that if ever he has known Christ after the flesh—that is, thought of him literally as an historical being—he will henceforth know him so no more—"for me to live is Christ." This is certainly a figurative expression, as are many passages of St. Paul's letters. That there were deeper and still other symbolic meanings in the Christian

faith is indicated again by St. Paul's use of the word *mysterion*—translated "mystery"—and by the passage to which I have once referred in which he tells his followers that they are but babes in Christ and must be yet fed on the "milk of the word." The symbolic interpretation here suggested was a common method employed by Gnostics, Docetics, and Kabbalists during the early Christian centuries.

Again there are such symbolic rites as circumcision, the sacrifice, and baptism. The cross is a generally recognized symbol and is said to be much older than Christianity. Clergymen are still called "pastors"—shepherds. The sign of the fish once had a part in Christian symbolism, which is now largely forgotten, although Jung finds the fish to be a very common symbol at once erotic and religious.

The biblical words used to express the idea of the Deity are symbolic—just as Fiske showed that such words as God, Deus, Zeus, in the Aryan group of languages are symbolic. But the Hebrews seem to have been pretty conscious of the symbolism of some of the terms they used. This is shown in the deliberate manner in which they employed the word

*"Adonai"*—"Lord." In the Hebrew language there are two words each of which may be translated "Lord," and of course the word "Lord" itself, as an expression of the idea of the Deity, is a figure of speech. One of these words is Baal, and means lord in the sense that one is lord of his house, head of the family. It is a title by which Hebrew women spoke of their lord and master—husband. This seems to have been the original term used to express the idea of God as Lord in the Hebrew text, notably in the books Samuel and Kings. In these documents certain names which are probably compounded with the word Baal—Maphebaal and Ishbaal—have been worked over and the word *Bosheth* substituted. Bosheth means "shame." The substitution was doubtless made after the prophets in their enthusiasm for ethical monotheism abolished the Baal cults that had prevailed at various local shrines. The title Baal became a "shameful" term when applied to Jehovah; it symbolized elements which were out of harmony with the austere prophetic conception of the Deity. Hence Hosea issues the commandment that the Children of Israel should no longer use the symbol "Baali," but "Adonai,"

a word which is free from the prohibited implications. The word "Adonai" was thereafter substituted.

I give this instance because it shows no little concern on the part of ancient religious writers over popular symbols, and, furthermore, indicates that the symbolic nature of such terms was recognized. There are also indications that the bull and the serpent were once used in the religious ceremonies of the Hebrews, and that these symbols met with treatment similar to that of the word Baal, yet they survived in attenuated form as cherubim—winged bulls—and seraphim, fiery snakes. As these symbols could no longer represent the Deity, they were, in good, dreamlike fashion, said to "go before him."

The symbolic language of Christian hymns is so obvious that one needs but to call to memory a few characteristic lines—"O Mother, Dear Jerusalem," "The Church has one Foundation," "Crown Him with many crowns, the Lamb upon the throne," (an imagery which it is difficult to visualize), "I have anchored my soul in the Haven of Rest," "Throw out the life line."

The unconscious motive of certain Protes-

tant hymns is so near the surface that all must be more or less aware of some of the elements of their meaning. Note the imagery in such lines as "Jesus, lover of my soul, let me to thy bosom fly," or "I heard the voice of Jesus say, come unto me and rest, Lay down, thou weary one, lay down thy head upon my breast." I remember a song that I once heard during a revival in a country church in Illinois. As they sang it the people beat the rhythm with their hands or feet and made swaying movements with their bodies. The words were something as follows:

> Leave your sins and come to Jesus;
> He will enfold you in his arms.
> In the arms of my dear Saviour
> O there are ten thousand charms!

This example and others are somewhat too obvious to be typical, and the erotic motive is rather simple. But I think it can hardly be denied that in such cases an erotic wish of some sort is at work or the believer would not represent his relations to the Christ in such symbols.

Symbolic language of another sort is characteristic of one of the simplest and most sig-

nificant passages in the New Testament, the "Lord's Prayer." Deity is thought of figuratively as "Our Father," and the prayer is made up of such symbolic phrases as "Thy Kingdom come," "Give us this day our daily bread," "Forgive us our debts," "Deliver us from the evil one." This prayer is a poem, as is much religious thought.

Höffding says, "The fact that poetic form is the only possible is a sign that we are in the presence of the highest." He further shows that even the concepts "high" and "low" are symbols. Certain modern philosophers have long maintained that most, if not all, religious ideas were symbols. Ellis quotes Vailinger to this effect, and with approval. This same view appears in the writings of many Freudians. James also suggests such a view in the *Will to Believe,* where, however, he is more concerned about the verification of such "fictions" through their results in experience than about the determinants of such ideas. Strauss in the last part of his *Life of Jesus* suggested that the figure of Christ should be understood as a symbol. But so much attention was given to the discussion of the first part of that book and to the historical problems which it raised, that

little serious notice was taken of the author's attempt to reinterpret the story. William Benjamin Smith a few years ago, in two books, *The Pre-Christian Jesus* and *Ecce Deus,* denied the historicity of the Jesus story and argued for a strictly symbolic interpretation of the legend. But Smith's method of interpretation did not gain wide acceptance, chiefly, I think, because he seemed to hold that the ideas so symbolically expressed were doctrinal and theoretical. I wonder that the author did not suggest a more psychological interpretation. Santayana in *Scepticism and Animal Faith* says, "Can anything be more evident than that religion, language, patriotism, love, science itself, speak in symbols?"

I have tried to show that the symbolic character of many religious ideas and customs is a widely recognized fact. Are *all* the expressions of religion symbols? If not, by what criterion shall we draw a line? What test shall we use to distinguish that which we may properly interpret as symbol, from that which should be taken literally?

It may be said that some religious ideas correspond to purely external realities, facts which exist independently of the thinking processes

of the believer. Metaphysical "truths" and historical events, it will be said, surely do not derive their reality from the thinking mind. How, then, can ideas concerning these things be symbols? And religious teaching contains many such ideas.

In reply, we might raise the further question—a much-debated one among philosophers—how far any of our ideas correspond to the realities which they are about. But it is not necessary for us to try now to answer such a question. It is enough for our purposes that certain ideas lead us to satisfactory conclusions, and to desired results in conduct. Such ideas may be said to have the function of the real—to be "true" for the purposes for which they are thought, provided that the kind of reality we ascribe to them is not incompatible with other recognized "realities" which cannot be dispensed with.

The question is, what sort of reality shall we attribute to the metaphysical concepts and the historical traditions which are taught as part of religion? Let us say that certain of these ideas correspond to the facts. Even so, historical and metaphysical realities have not, *as such,* any religious significance; that signifi-

cance is given to them by the religious thinker. It is only when such facts, granting their existence, are made use of by the religious interest for its own sake, that they have religious significance. Let us notice how the religious mind conceives of these "realities." It always assumes a particular view of them. It is this particular—we might say biased—view which is of value to the religionist. And this view is not reached after careful impartial study and investigation, nor is it often open to revision. It is taken in advance, and for a special purpose. Hence, as a religionist one's thinking becomes that of the special pleader, not the independent truth-seeker. The Truth which the religionist seeks is not truth, whatever it may be, but "the Truth," his own truth. He is happiest when he rediscovers what he already started out with, what he is compelled to believe by something within himself. This is not to say that religious people may not be open-minded. When, however, they are so, they are dominated by other than strictly religious interests. "Fides implicita," "credo quia absurdum est," "cogito ut credam"—has not this been a traditional attitude of spirits wholly surrendered to the religious interest?

Theological ideas are not, therefore, purely rational inferences which the intellect makes and holds subject to verification or subsequent modification. They are the assumptions which the believer makes because his "soul" demands them. Their "truth" consists in the correctness with which they express and satisfy his inner needs. Such ideas have a purely symbolic value, and even though metaphysics or historical research should reach conclusions identical with those of religion, the significance of such conclusions would be wholly different.

For instance, there is the idea of God. This concept occupies a central place in more than one philosophical system. Notwithstanding the fact that many philosophers have been chiefly occupied—either positively or negatively—with the religious interest, and have consequently departed from "pure reason," it must be said that the God of philosophy has very little in common with the God of religion. God, as Being, as Idea, as Absolute, as Infinite, as Substance, is a purely logical abstraction. And though the idea is just as truly a symbol as any religious idea, it has in philosophy a function merely as an instrument of thought. Strictly speaking, the philosopher's God, when

his system requires such a generalization, has no more religious value than the hypothesis of luminiferous ether in physics, or the Euclidean concept of homogeneous space. Men do not enter into relations with the Absolute, nor pray to Substance. Religion, on the contrary, conceives of its deity in terms of humanity. When the religious interest makes use—as it commonly does—of the terminology of philosophy, it reads into these abstract "principles" meanings borrowed from its own needs. It changes the idea of deity, makes it vital, transfers it from the region of theory, speculation, and formal logic, to that of intense personal concern.

All of the terms which religion uses to express its ideas of God, even the words God, Deus, Theos, themselves, are figures of speech borrowed from purely human experience. The Deity is "Father," "Sovereign," "Lord," "Redeemer—all of which terms are symbols derived from human relationships. The human appreciation of familiar objects appears in all these words, which are derivatives of the word "sky"—Jupiter, Deus, Zeus, etc. Human effort and activity form the basis of such symbols as "All Mighty," and "Creator." So common-

place a physiological fact as the breath provides the symbolism for the conception of God as Spirit, as Pneuma, as Holy Ghost. The human function of intelligence becomes the analogy for the conception of God as All Knowing, Omniscient, and our human valuation of objects lie at the bottom of the Platonic conception of Deity as "The Good." The name Jehovah, or, as it appears in the Hebrew text, JHWH —the vowels are those of the word Adonai which the Hebrews pronounced instead of the sacred name—is, according to the book of Exodus, derived from the word "to be," and hence is symbolic of the abstract idea of existence. This is rather a Platonic mode of thought, and is hardly in harmony with the psychology of the document in which it appears. Some Hebrew scholars are inclined to think that the passage in which the alleged derivation of the divine name is given is a late editorial emendation, and that a study of proper names in which the word occurs, like Abijah, Elijah, etc., would indicate that the name Jehovah, or Jawah, was an equivalent of the old Semitic word Ea, or Jah—the storm God who appears in Babylonian mythology.

Rank has shown that the mythological names

of the gods which would apparently identify them with certain phenomena of nature should not lead us to the conclusion that the ancients were merely deifying natural forces. The several objects in nature were really themselves symbols of various psychological interests. We shall have more to say on this point later. My point is that, though the conception of deity symbolized by the name Jehovah is in many ways richer in emotional and ethical content than that symbolized by Thor or Zeus, they are all three equally symbolic of certain human appreciations of reality. We simply have no way of conceiving the source and spiritual meaning of our being other than in figurative imagery. Foster once said that the idea of God is the symbol of our appreciation of the universe in its ideal-achieving capacity. James in the essay "God and Reflex Action" said that the function of the idea was to make us "feel at home" in the universe.

But some one will say there is the idea of God as creator. Of course if one conceives of creation after the analogy of the human process of manufacturing, then indeed this idea is symbolic. But is it not possible to conceive of God as First Cause in a manner which

is not at any rate symbolic of mere human appreciations and wishes? I am not so sure. The concept of causation is very puzzling. Hume maintained that our idea of causation is merely our observation of the regular sequence of events. Be that as it may, whatever meaning the concept of causation has, it is as First Cause, a strictly logical concept belonging to philosophy, not to religion. To think of "First Cause," one must conceive of existence as a series of causes and effects. There can be nothing in any effect that is uncaused—nothing, then, that was not in some way in its cause. And since every cause was the effect of some preceding cause, there can be nothing in any moment that did not exist, potentially at least, in the first moment. This whole piece of reasoning is open to criticism, but its meaning is clear. It is pure determinism, and is, moreover, a mechanistic view of the world. It is, strictly speaking, an anti-religious view. The logic of such mechanistic determinism is that the universe is indifferent to our interests. There is nothing in such reasoning which necessarily implies the existence of any alternatives, either in conduct or in our fate, nothing but blind necessity, nothing that would lead us to

believe that the First Cause itself, once it had set the series of inevitables in motion, could modify the course of events in answer to prayer.

But religion demands a different sort of world. It must have final causes—purpose; as well as first causes—mere necessity. It contemplates a world the natural processes of which may be manipulated in the interest of "salvation." Even a predestinationalist like Jonathan Edwards conceived of what we call the First Cause as will, and endowed it with the human—or superhuman—qualities of reason and the foreknowledge of a glorious consummation in which the elect should share.

Then why not say that this First Cause has so determined the universal course of events that they are congenial to man's spiritual interests? Very well, but now we are talking about something quite different from the purely logical concept of First Cause. We are now seeking escape from the very relentlessness implied by that concept. We have added something that we wish to be true. We have humanized our thinking. This purposeful first cause substitutes for our concept, which was an instrument of theoretical interest, an idea which is

determined by our emotional interests. This latter idea is really symbolic of those needs which were not satisfied by the mechanistic view with which we started. We are out of philosophy now and back in religion. So with all metaphysical concepts which appear in religious thinking. The case is the same whether we examine the concept of God or of the Soul, or of eternity or of the moral order of life. As the objects of pure reason, each of these concepts leaves us in a world of empty and lifeless abstraction. As objects of faith, each of these ideas becomes a sort of metaphor, a useful, often necessary, figurative expression of a "spiritual" way of taking the experiences of life.

Now what about the alleged historical facts which constitute much of religious tradition? Many people think that the very truth of Christianity, for instance, consists in the conformity of the Gospel narrative with events as they actually occurred. If they should become convinced that Jesus was not born of a virgin, that he performed no miracles, that he never rose from the dead, many people would say what I once heard a well-known Rationalist say: "I have only one objection to Christianity;

it isn't true." This appears to me to be a very hasty judgment. No intelligent person would make such a statement about Shakespeare's "Hamlet," if he doubted that the Prince of Denmark existed as an historical person. Existence as an historical fact is but one kind of truth, and may be relatively unimportant for the religious interest. The truth of Christianity, as religious truth, might conceivably remain unaltered, even though no such person as Jesus could be found in history.

Moreover, the most clearly established historical facts do not as mere history have religious significance. It is only when religion seizes upon them, and makes them instruments of its peculiar orientations to life, that historical facts possess religious truth. This seizure upon facts of history, moreover, commonly adds something. It is not strange that the alleged facts reported in religious tradition have a close likeness to certain myths and miracle stories which the human imagination has clung to throughout the ages. The reason why certain historical facts—assuming that they are facts—are remembered in religious tradition is because their memory serves the same purposes that are also served by certain myths. The

similarity of these facts and the purposes they serve, to myths and their functions, commonly results in such confusion after a few centuries that it is practically impossible for historical students to separate the two. What difference does it make, if the religious purpose is equally well served?

For adequate knowledge of the natural facts to which we must adjust ourselves in daily living, it is important to know whether we may expect miracles to happen. Necessary and correct as it is to raise such a question, and skeptical as it causes us to be regarding the historicity of many religious legends, it must be remembered that man does not live by bread alone, his life is more than utilitarian behavior, and in the religious mood, just as in dreams when no such distinction exists, the difference between fact and fiction is rather irrelevant. Fact is a function of behavior in a world from which religion gives us an ideal escape.

James in *The Principles of Psychology* shows that the past has only symbolic reality in any case. When it becomes symbolic of certain psychological interests the past has religious value, not as pure past, but because of the use to which it is put. The Christ of the New

Testament is a symbolic figure, whether or not he ever existed as an historical character. Many elements of the Gospel narrative are held to be unhistorical by Christian scholars who have given the subject serious study. A courageous attempt has been made during the last seventy-five years, chiefly by German scholars, to reconstruct out of what was recognized to be an accumulation of myth and legend a true historical Jesus. But the problem is of intellectual interest chiefly; and even so, the difficulties have been so great, and the data so small, that the work done has necessarily contained much material that was purely conjectural. The beauty and wonder of the Gospel story had for the most part to be stripped off. Such a person as the man Jesus, whose dim historic outlines are seemingly restored by this long labor of critical analysis, may perhaps once have lived, but this is not the Christ of Christian faith.

According to the working hypothesis of New Testament criticism, the fictitious figure of the Christ developed in spite of those actions and sayings of Jesus which are held to be historical. Historical scholarship may perhaps be the gainer by this research, but as the religious

emotion once created the Christ symbol, it may be expected to cling to it. And if, after so many years of strenuous study and effort, the attempt to locate the person of Jesus in history leaves the believer with only a martyred and mistaken idealist, a moralistic and somewhat revolutionary Hebrew prophet—from whom we may derive inspiration, doubtless, though with some difficulty; and if, as we are told, the historical existence of even this far-away figure is still open to serious question, why not abandon the whole search for historical fact so far as it concerns the story of Christ, and treat the narrative as pure symbol? It has that value, at any rate; and on the authority of the best scholarship, that which has really had a dominant place in Christian faith is held to be unhistorical. It would seem that criticism had started out to demonstrate the historicity of Jesus and had, in fact, succeeded in leading us to the rediscovery of the symbolic Christ of religious experience.

If it is as symbol that the story of the Christ has its value for the believer, we may assume that such is the case for all the characters who appear in religious history. From the point of view of the religious interest, the question of

historical fact matters very little indeed. Persons who appear in our dreams may or may not exist also in the every-day world. At any rate, they exist in the dream thought and for it. It is as such that they have their significance for the psyche which created the dream.

James in "The Varieties of Religious Experience," spoke of religion as a total reaction to our world. The believer thus assumes an emotional attitude toward existence as a whole. He wishes to value it, assign to it a character, give it a meaning. And even if religious thought were content with a realistic view of the objects of experience, the attempt to think the whole would inevitably lead to what Walter Lippman calls "the pictures in our heads."

But these "pictures" are not merely efforts to represent to our minds the world of objects. As we have said, they are more like the pictures which occur in dreams. Both religion and dreaming proceed from our inner instinctive and emotional nature, which Rivers in *Instinct and the Unconscious* shows commonly reacts upon the all-or-none principle. It is characteristic of instinct and emotion that if there is any response at all, the response tends to be complete—to go beyond what would or-

dinarily be required for adaptation to the situation. All "total reactions" tend to reveal an all-or-none type of response. Rivers held that this all-or-none type of behavior was part of the original mode of response of the organism to its environment. He called this primitive kind of reaction "protopathic," and maintained that the tendency to such behavior still exists in man. But the organism had also developed another type of behavior—a specific response, a mode of reaction in which the stimulus is defiantly located and the movement called forth confined to such behavior as has adaptive value. This latter reflex he termed "epicritic." He says that adequate adjustment to environment is possible only when the epicritic mode of response holds in check the protopathic—that is, suppresses it.

This process of suppression or "repression" which would thus appear to be necessary for any co-ordinated organic behavior is in man carried to such a point that it results in holding in check the vast storehouse of primitive and infantile tendencies. Many of the repressed impulses are egoistic and anti-social. During childhood the individual passes through a long and often painful discipline in which he

learns to inhibit certain impulses. The environment he soon learns necessarily leaves many of his desires unsatisfied. Conscious attention is soon diverted from these impulses and desires. Habits of thinking are cultivated which are in accord with what the environment requires. Thus these unattended tendencies to respond—many of them still being constantly stimulated from within the organism itself—drop out of consciousness. They become "the Unconscious" of psychopathology. This Unconscious is not a secret back stairway by which we may ascend to supermundane knowledge—as certain so-called modern mystics would like to regard what they call the "subconscious." It is basically biological—animal, if you wish. The unconscious impulses become associated in various ways with ideas and objects of common experience. The individual is not able to trace these associations. And in dreams and art and religion, where direct response to situations is not taking place, the repressed wishes and feelings express themselves, clothed in the imagery with which they have become associated. Hence the expressions of the unconscious take on symbolic form.

Freud in *The General Introduction to Psychoanalysis* says of dream thought:

> "The dream element is itself a *symbol* of the unconscious dream thought. . . . Symbolism is perhaps the most noteworthy chapter of dream study.
>
> "In the first place, since symbols are permanent or constant translations, they realize, in a certain measure, the ideal of ancient as well as popular dream interpretation, an ideal which by means of our technique we had left behind. They permit us in certain cases to interpret a dream without questioning the dreamer, who, aside from this, has no explanation for the symbol.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> "The nature of the symbol relationship is a comparison, but not any desired comparison. One suspects a special pre-requisite for this comparison, but is unable to say what it is. Not everything to which we are able to compare an object or an occurrence occurs in the dream as its symbol; on the other hand, the dream does not symbolize anything we may choose,

but only specific elements of the dream thought. There are limitations on both sides. It must be admitted that the idea of the symbol cannot be sharply delineated at all times—it mingles with the substitution, dramatization, etc., even approaches the allusion. In one series of symbols the basic comparison is apparent to the senses. On the other hand, there are other symbols which raise the question of where the similarity, the "something intermediate" of this suspected comparison, is to be sought. We may discover it by more careful consideration, or it may remain hidden to us. Furthermore, it is extraordinary, if the symbol is a comparison, that this comparison is not revealed by the association, that the dreamer is not acquainted with the comparison, that he makes use of it without knowing of its existence. Indeed, the dreamer does not even care to admit the validity of this comparison when it is pointed out to him. So you see, a symbolic relationship is a comparison of a very special kind, the origin of which is not yet clearly understood by us. Perhaps

later we may find references to this unknown factor. . . .

"The number of things that find symbolic representation in the dream is not great—the human body as a whole, parents, children, brothers and sisters, birth, death, nakedness and a few others. . . .

"Parents appear in the dream as *king* and *queen,* or other persons highly respected. The dream in this instance is very pious. It treats children, and brothers and sisters, less tenderly; they are symbolized as little *animals* or *vermin.* Birth is almost regularly represented by some reference to *water;* either one plunges into the water or climbs out of it, or rescues some one from the water, or is himself rescued from it—*i.e.,* there is a mother relation to the person. Death is replaced in the dream by taking a journey, riding in a train; being dead, by various darksome, timid suggestions; nakedness, by clothes and uniforms. You see here how the lines between symbolic and suggestive representation merge one into another. . . .

"Secondly, these symbolic representa-

tions are peculiar neither to the dreamer nor to the dream work by means of which they become expressed. We have learned that mythology and fairy-tales make use of the same symbolism, as well as do the people in their sayings and songs, the ordinary language of every day, and poetic phantasy. The field of symbolism is an extraordinarily large one, and dream symbolism is but a small part thereof." [1]

Brill in *Fundamental Conceptions of Psychoanalysis* says of this symbolism:

"We may define a symbol as an imperfect comparison between two objects which in reality may have very little resemblance; it is nothing but a form of comparison. If you observe children as they grow up and learn to talk, you will find that they are always thinking in pictures and symbols. There can be no doubt that they do not think in the sense that we generally suppose—that is, in the sense of reasoning—but that they merely associate and compare. . . .

"There was a patient in the Psychiatric

[1] *A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis,* pp. 124, 125-126, 137.

Clinic at Zurich who would place folded rose petals against her forehead and hit them, thus producing a crackling sound. Nobody could fathom the meaning of this action until Professor Bleuler began to study her case thoroughly and found that she became insane upon her lover's committing suicide by shooting himself in the head. Thus her behavior in this particular instance was a symbolic representation of the shooting; she was reliving an old episode. . . . Now there are certain symbols that are ethnic; they resemble certain things to such an extent that you find them wherever there is an unconscious mentation. Mythology and primitive religions particularly abound with them, for in this sphere of mental activity we find that the human being in yet an infantile condition; the difference between reality and fiction not yet clearly marked. . . . When we examine the language that we find in dreams, deliria, hallucinations, and delusions, we are at once impressed with that fact; our unconscious mentation is still swathed in the mystery of this time-old symbolism and it is altogether inscrutable

to one who does not understand the language of the unconscious.

"There are many symbols that have lost their original meaning for us to-day, though they are still commonly used under different forms. It is noteworthy that the cross was originally a Phallic symbol and, like so many other symbols, was absorbed into Christianity from paganism. St. Paul and other leaders of the Christian Church apparently deemed it best to allow these pagan symbols, gradually giving them, however, different connotations.

"The story of Adam and Eve now takes on its real allegorical significance. Adam and Eve represent the infancy of humanity, when it was untroubled, naked, and free, when it was in paradise. Then comes the snake, the symbol of sex, and the situation takes on an altogether different aspect. In other words, the child in its infancy is in paradise, but as soon as it grows to the age of puberty it is driven out of paradise and must now "live by the sweat of the brow." The story be-

comes perfectly comprehensible to us in this light. . . .

"Apart from the fact that the language of the dream is visual, another difficulty in dream analysis is that when the dream wishes to represent something hidden, it resorts to the same mechanisms that we use in the waking state when we wish to express something indirectly; that is to say, it has recourse to the *double entendre* (double meaning), distortions, and similar mechanisms. I need not give you examples; . . . the witticisms you hear and read; you will then realize that in a sense nobody expresses himself truthfully. . . .

"In the beginning of our course we pointed out that such imperfect analogies, such symbolic expressions as we find in dreams, are found also in symptoms. It matters not how bizarre, how seemingly senseless, the patient's symptom may be, it has a definite meaning in his life, it bears an intimate relation to his inner problems and conflicts; and it is only by understanding that we can comprehend and evaluate his attitude toward the world." [1]

[1] *Fundamental Conceptions of Psychoanalysis*, pp. 59, 65-66, 154, 176.

Hence it would appear that the dream is primarily a symbolic expression of a repressed wish, and it should be noted that both these writers point out the fact that there is something similar in dream symbolism to that of religion.

Perhaps as good a definition of religion as any would be, *religion is the symbolic appreciation of the mystery of existence in terms of the interests of the ego.* To put the matter more simply, we might say that religion is our symbolic expression of our wish that the universe were run in our interest. But then we should have to make clear what we mean by the phrase "our interest"; for the interest, as we shall see, which motivates much of religion is not necessarily "egoistic" in the sense that egoism may be opposed to altruism as a moral ideal. It is egoistic in the sense that the dream is egoistic, ego-centric, an unconscious preoccupation with the conflict between our self-appreciation and those tendencies in us which are unacceptable to self-consciousness.

All this is only another way of saying that the chief interest of religion is the salvation of the soul. Our ego must secure itself against its own inner disintegration. Snares from

without and temptations within seek to entice it once more into sin. The soul must be saved, made secure from sin; that is, self-appreciation must be kept up in conflict with those impulses in us which by their very unconscious existence would destroy our ideal of ourselves. In the effort to preserve this ideal self, something more is at stake than our bare "principle of identity," though that, too, may be involved. The self, or ego, which it is the function of religion to secure, is not the "transcendental ego" which philosophy has sometimes tried to identify with the soul. It is the empirical self, what James called "the ideal social me," one of our known selves, not the self as pure knower. The self about which religion is concerned is something about which people have very strong feelings. James in *Principles of Psychology* showed that feeling about self is really "objective." It is a center of interest with the prosperity or failure of which we feel happiness or dejection.

This "ideal social me" is as truly an object of thought and feeling as is the "material me," and the latter includes our bodily organs, our clothes, our possessions. The "ideal social me" is not an original innate idea. It seems

that it is constructed as we go along; it is probably never wholly completed. Dr. Alfred Adler speaks of this process of construction as the creation of a fictitious guiding line or imaginary goal. He holds that the child first begins to fabricate it as a protest against the feeling of inferiority. He says that in time this ideal of ourselves becomes a sort of instrument by which we achieve a sense of importance and security. To it we habitually refer our choices. He says that we do not commonly accept or reject things because of their intrinsic worth, but accordingly as they enhance or lower the standing of this ideal goal which we set for ourselves.

Thus we create a sort of *personality picture,* an imaginary portrait of ourselves, and for the realization and recognition of this picture we struggle. This necessary fiction about ourselves is probably the most important thing in us. It is the basis of our "character," our honor, our sense of worth. It becomes for each of us an instrument of orientation to the alternative possibilities of experience. If any reaction to stimulus appears to us to be in harmony with the behavior of this imaginary person whose portrait we hang on the walls of our fancy, we

are likely to respond. If such behavior does not fit the picture, if certain facts of experience materially change the outlines, we seek to avoid such things, to inhibit behavior trends that spoil our self-picture. And if there are persistent tendencies in us which do not belong to our pictured self at all—and there are such in each one of us—we strive to put them out of mind or cause them to seek satisfaction in such disguised form that our attention is not held by them.

Undesirable facts within and without us, if they cannot be removed, are disguised, thought away, distorted in order that the vital and necessary fiction about ourselves may be preserved. If the fiction or personality picture happens to be such that it is broken up by the behavior required in ordinary response to the every-day environment, the individual will often build a secure castle in Spain within the impenetrable imaginary walls of which he keeps the self-portrait secure from any disturbing contact with reality. For this reason, we all have a slight tendency to mold the world nearer to our heart's desire, to change, moreover, the appearance of the actions and longings in which we are "not true to ourselves," to make our

existence seem more harmonious than it really is. We are always uncomfortable in the presence of that which throws a challenge in the face of our personality picture. If the challenge comes from those elements of our nature which we have for good cause kept out of the picture, the ostracized desires and impulses are obliged to find symbolic expression in dreams and art and religion. If the challenge comes from without, and none of our pictures are perfect adjustments since the world is not wholly congenial to our personalities, we seek security in an ideal reordering of the world in ways that appear congenial.

Thus the fiction about ourselves is not only the most valuable thing in life for us; it is always in conflict, more or less intense, with reality. This conflict is partially conscious and partially unconscious. When conscious, it stimulates us to self-mastery and to efforts at control over the forces of the environment. When it is unconscious, there are in general three courses which men follow in order to save their self-valuation—their soul.

Dreams, neurotic symptoms, and religious symbols alike may have the functions of defense, compensation, and escape. Brill uses the

term "mechanism of defense" to describe those types of thinking in which the ego seeks to protect itself against undesirable obsessions and tendencies to action. In a sense the phenomenon known as repression, purposive forgetting, is a mechanism of this sort. The symptoms of the psychoneurosis may also be regarded as solutions of the problems which arise out of the conflict of the self with its chaotic impulses. Thus the neurotic symptom is often an attempt at self-cure. The war neurosis has been shown to be frequently a defense of the patient against the admission of fear. Neurotic blindness is often a defense against certain forms of infantile eroticism. The wish to return to the childish love of the mother is often disguised by forms of compulsive behavior in which the meaning of the forbidden wish is screened from the consciousness of the subject.

Freud in the *Interpretation of Dreams* reports the case of a young man who was for a long time unable to leave his room, and spent his time writing an elaborate journal so that it might be used as an alibi in case he should be suspected of killing some man. Analysis revealed the fact that underneath this queer

behavior there was an actual survival of infantile hatred of his father, and that this hatred which determined his abnormal behavior was the emotional correlative of an infantile erotic attachment to the mother image. The journal was a defense mechanism. Sometimes a pathological hatred of authority may be such a defense for a like infantile antipathy to the father. An illustration of this sort was brought to my attention two years ago while I was lecturer in social psychology at the New School for Social Research in New York. One of my students was given the task of making a study of the psychology of revolutionary radicalism. A carefully prepared questionnaire was sent to a number of active revolutionary propagandists. Some of the returns revealed a state of morbid rebellion against any sort of authority, and in most such cases the answers to questions regarding early family history and relationships to the parents indicated that the writer was motivated unconsciously by what psychologists call the Œdipus complex. The attitude of rebellion against the evil capitalist system was thus at bottom a defense against the inability to detach one-self from an infantile emotional fixation.

Likewise the person who is haunted by a wish for the death of a near relative, or by a suicide reverie, commonly defends himself by some sort of disguise in which the wish appears in consciousness as overanxiety for the health of the relative or, as in the case of the suicide wish, longing for peace. Men in crowds when they are motivated by love of cruelty and torture commonly defend their self-respect and save their faces by disguising their sadistic behavior so that it appears to be motivated by morality, justice, patriotism, etc.

Defense mechanisms often appear in the symbolism of religion. Note the complex of ideas whereby the believer is assured that his sins are forgiven. Intolerance which may characterize religious groups like other crowds commonly appears as "zeal for the Lord." The struggle with erotic impulses, besides finding expression in many religious symbols, appears frequently as war of the spirit against the flesh—as ascetic purity, as moralism. The wish to be important may assume the form of an ambition to excel others in humility. Note the emotional *double entendre* in such phrases as, "I am the chief of sinners," "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth,"

"Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord, I will repay."

Another group of phenomena which emanate from the unconscious is explained by psychopathologists as "compensation." One who in youth was addicted to cruelty may in his later conscious life go to the opposite extreme and be very tender-hearted, and one who is secretly obsessed by a feeling of inferiority will often consciously regard himself as a great fellow.

Many of our virtues of extenuation belong in this class of mental phenomena. I recall meeting one night a fellow townsman at a little railway station several miles from home. He was in a maudlin state of intoxication, and tearfully told me how deeply he regretted having a neighbor see him in such a condition. He then inquired about the welfare of "the dearest little woman in God's world," his wife, whom he had not seen for several days. He assured me solemnly that he loved her and that he was a "good family man." The drunken song with which Harry Lauder used to entertain his audiences ran, "I'm full as the deil, absolutely full, yet I adore the country I was born in." Excessive patriotism may be

compensation for many personal defects. This is one reason why war is so difficult to abolish. Many men who during times of peace have scarcely a peg on which they may hang their self-respect, suddenly find on the outbreak of hostilities that they are heroes.

Compensation, moreover, may be made for almost any psychic loss. I recently read a courageous essay by a well-known American journalist on the advantages of being lame. The loss of our youth is made up to the psyche by the feeling that we have increased in wisdom. Lack of personal beauty may find compensation in virtue or in the feeling that one is useful to others. One may enjoy even vicariously the success of others and find in their happiness a measure of compensation for his own sense of failure.

It will hardly be denied that religion offers the believer many compensations. Mathison, when stricken blind, wrote "O love that will not let me go." Many persons find in religious activity a new interest in life after the experience of grief and misfortune. There is a hymn which contains the words, "Naked, poor, despised, forsaken, Thou from hence my all shalt be." Penitents find in religion a cure for

the sense of sin: "Sin had left a crimson stain; He washed it white as snow." There are many such passages, as, "Whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth"; "I reckon that the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared to the glories which shall be revealed to us"; "He that loseth his life, shall find it"; "Great is your reward in heaven"; "Blessed be ye poor"; "Blessed are they that mourn"; "The Lord hath chosen the foolish things to confound the wise"; "The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong."

The imagery of compensation in the often repeated Twenty-third Psalm is interesting. "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies"; one can just see the picture—here I, humble one, sit at a divine banquet, served by the Lord of All, who anoints my head like that of a prince; He fills my cup, and I sup while all who ever despised me or ill-treated me gather about and look on with hungry eyes, but they must remain outside.

Even the dreadful idea of hell may sometimes be used as compensation. The following incident reveals such a use. In my student days the woman with whom a number of us boarded

overheard one day a discussion of the doctrine of hell, in which I expressed some doubt whether such a place in literal fact existed. Later she indignantly asked me, "Why do you take away people's faith like that?" I said that I did not realize that I was taken seriously and that, even so, it did not seem that the loss of the prospect of hell could greatly rob humanity of its spiritual comfort. She replied: "Well, it is a comfort to me, I can tell you that, young man. Here I've been a good, respectable woman all the years of my life. And I know a lot as are no better than they should be. Do you mean to tell me that those people are going to get off free? If there is no hell for sinners, I'd like to know what reward there is for decent people."

One is a little disillusioned about human nature when he discovers people seeking compensation for their virtues as well as for their vices, and especially on occasion compensation of this sort. But then, as we know, we are all sinners, even the best of us, and perhaps there are more occasions than we realize when the psyche feels a sense of loss in being good. In such cases it is not surprising that compensation is found in the idea of future rewards and

punishments. When one reflects upon the many hardships and losses that we all have to bear, it is only natural that our troubled spirits should seek and find compensation in the many consolations of faith.

Finally the psyche solves its conflicts by the elaboration of mechanisms of escape. In dreams and in daydreams the wish fancy breaks through the limitations set by the every-day world and creates another reality in which it may realize itself. Hence escape is found by taking refuge from the real into a thought-world. This is a very common habit. We all do it to some extent. It is difficult for the most disciplined of us to distinguish always between what is and what we wish to be. I find that in propaganda and in crowd thinking generally this distinction is rarely made. Public opinion consists very largely of such rationalization of wishes. Most thinking on social and moral questions is really a flight from the real. Paranoic patients, as I have pointed out earlier in this book, commonly take refuge from reality in a self-made world of their own delusions.

Whole systems of philosophy have as their primary function that of providing an escape

from the sense of the reality of experience into a world of pure idea, where conflicts are dissolved in a "higher harmony of thought," where the Good, the True, and the Beautiful may be possessed in contemplation. Platonism is a perfect escape mechanism of this kind.

It is, then, not strange that the Platonic philosophy should have close affinities with religion. In fact, it is woven into much traditional theology, Jewish and Christian. I have earlier in this discussion suggested that one of the functions of religion is to provide the psyche with an escape from the hard inevitables of the order of nature and society. To religion the Kingdom of Heaven is not of this world. The present evil world is in the power of Satan, but Satan and the world are overcome. Death is swallowed up in victory. The relentless mechanism of natural forces is displaced by the smile of a benevolent supernatural. Over the ruthless struggle for existence religion throws the mantle of an everlasting mercy. For the riddle of existence it finds an answer that gives such meaning to life that the simplest and the wisest may be satisfied and their restless questioning quieted.

At the end of all our strivings and efforts

science sees our world a frozen clod whirling through emptiness about a cheerless and exhausted sun, bearing on its sides the marks of man's once hopeful activity, fragments of his works of art mixed with glacial debris, all waiting in the dark for millenniums until the final crash comes, when even the burned out sun shall be shattered in collision with another like it, and the story shall all be over while there is no one to remember and none to care. All will be as if it had never been. Religion pictures instead an eternal city where lost faces are seen again and every tear is wiped away, while white angels sing and enjoy forever the final outcome of all creation. With such a picture in mind, death is not death, but entrance into fullness of life. Every loss is gain, every failure a success. Loneliness is fellowship, and pain is but a stepping stone to happiness. Everything becomes the very opposite of what experience reveals it to be.

And in this dream of the ages, man's unconscious wins a triumph over the world of reason and of fact and makes of "airy nothingness" a name and a local habitation for its every unsatisfied demand. The repressed, the rejected psychic forces, vagabonds and outcasts in the

world, roaming in the hinterland of the mind, hiding in the ravines of our acquired culture and lurking in the shadows of our practical interests, take revenge upon our rationally organized world, deny its values and its very reality, build in its stead a gleaming world of fancy and symbol, and whisper to that in the human breast which can find no place in our ordered existence: "Son of man, behold thy true estate"; "In the world ye have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

## IV

### *The Function of the Father Image*

PERHAPS our nearest and truest approaches to reality are æsthetic. Irreducible to formula, the process which we call creation ever eludes the intellect and as pure thinkers we find ourselves in the end always with a mere form of thought. Yet that which we strive to grasp and understand is not an illusion. In it we live and move and have our being. The presence—which we never can escape—we are often aware of as a strange, yet indescribably intimate and immediate, fact of knowledge.

Men have learned to call this mystery of our own and of all existence "God." The words in which we speak of it matter little; they are at best but attempts to communicate a fact which is unspeakable.

However, we may strive to conceive of the Reality which men call "God," whether as force, or as mechanism, or as Beauty or Truth

or Love—whether, as having moral purpose or as indifferent to us, it is always our own human interests that we are thinking about. We are substituting for the objective mystery certain secrets of our own hearts—as I have tried to show—certain of our unconscious wishes. Let us keep this point in mind; and it will be clear, then, that in making an analysis of the meaning of the symbolic expression of the religious interest in the idea of Deity, we are not discussing the existence of Deity itself.

In an earlier chapter, I said that all ideas about Deity are symbols. Of all these symbols, the father image is most significant. It is, moreover, most fruitful for our study because it carries over into religious thought many mental habits which are the result of a universal human experience. And as much in the unconscious is of infantile origin and meaning, the utilization by religion of a symbol which thus expresses the relation of the child to the parent is a very revealing fact.

The universality of the father—or grandfather—image as a religious symbol was regarded by Herbert Spencer as a fact of great importance. It led him to the formulation of his theory of the origin of religion in ancestor

worship. This fact might, however, have led the great evolutionist to look for the psychological origin of religion in the mechanisms with which the child adjusts its developing emotional life to an environment in which the father and mother are the chief figures.

The father image appears alike in primitive forms of religion and in the most modern. Frazer says that in early times, both among the Semites and among the Egyptians, the names of kings indicate a belief that these royal personages were children of the gods. Zeus is, according to Homer, the "father of gods and of men." The Latin name Jupiter is Zeus-pater, "father Zeus," or father God—and a recent Unitarian statement, of faith in which the doctrine of evolution is accepted as "the progress of mankind upward and onward forever," begins with a statement of belief in "the fatherhood of God."

Many such symbols as God the King or the Creator should be understood to be the father image. The Creator is not merely the "artificer," he is progenitor. Even Genesis, which carefully guards against the implication of sexual generation in the creative process, still retains a hint of the old mythological idea in

the statement that the spirit of God *"brooded"* upon the face of the primeval waters. And in addition to the fact that water is a universal mother symbol—birth being often represented as drawing the child out of the water—the Hebrew text here uses to indicate the ocean of chaos, the word "Tihom." Tihom is an equivalent of the old Semitic term "Tihimat," and in Babylonian mythology Tihimat is not only the ocean, she is a goddess, the primeval mother of all things.

The idea of God as King is also a father image. The King is often regarded as the father of his people, and is addressed as "sire." The father in certain myths also appears as king. In the Bible the Deity is frequently "the Father." This is interesting in view of the fact that the Hebrews appear to have adopted the Jehovah cult at a definite time in their history and to have conceived of that act of accepting the new religion as a covenant—or contract signed and sealed between the nation and its God. Yet "as a father pitieth his children so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him." Jeremiah's God says, "I will lead them, for I am a father to Israel." Again it is said, "Israel is my son," and Malachi asks:

"Have we not all one Father? hath not one God created us?"

The fatherhood of God occurs in the New Testament in passages too numerous to mention. Christ commonly speaks of "The Father," "My Father," "Your Heavenly Father." St. Paul says that the believers are now children of God, and may cry "Abba—Father." The priest who stands before the populace as representative of Deity is addressed "Father." I believe the word "Pope" is really "Papa."

So persistent is the father image that even in modern times, when men are inclined to make a sort of religion of the state, they use the word "Fatherland." In America the figure Uncle Sam has become a disguised father symbol. Doctor Crapsey has recently called attention to the rapid growth of the Joseph cult in southern Europe. The tendency in which Joseph is to some extent deified would seem to indicate a strong revival of a need for a very concrete father symbol.

The Joseph cult is an illustration of an important psychological fact, a fact which is commonly present in the use of the father image, and is an unmistakable sign of the infan-

tile emotions which are almost everywhere associated with religion. Joseph is a father, yet not a father. He is father in all respects except that of the conjugal relationship between the parents. Mary is Mother also in precisely the same way. The religious imagination retains the parental images, yet suppresses the function through which alone parenthood is possible.

This dislike of the full implications of parenthood is very widespread in religious thinking. Zeus is father, and, to be sure, Hera is his wife, and while the poets do not hesitate to relate various sexual episodes of Zeus, yet Hera is not a true mother image. In the Bible Jehovah is Father, but the mother image is repressed. This silence about how God becomes father is not an accident or mere oversight. Care often is taken to insulate the idea of divine paternity from the natural implications of fatherhood. Association of ideas here seems to be balked; there is emotional conflict underneath this symbol. The student of religion is puzzled at first. He naturally raises the question, since mature believers everywhere think of their God as Father, why do their minds so uniformly resist certain meanings

which they know are necessary to the idea? Yet this resistance has its analogy in a very widespread experience of childhood.

The child in his love for his father and mother at first thinks of their love as centering wholly about himself. He deeply resents their loving each other in ways that necessarily exclude him. Many persons still remember the distinct shock they experienced when they learned, perhaps from other children, the true meaning of the sexual interest which united their parents. Perhaps the child has long suspected the fact that his father and mother have between them a deep, carefully guarded secret. He often, however, stubbornly resists the confirmation of his suspicion and the knowledge of the significance of what he suspects. I recently learned of the case of a young woman who thus kept herself in deliberate, conscious ignorance of sex until she was almost grown up, and then, when recognition of the facts could no longer be denied, she passed through a period of bitter hatred for her father and mother. Such cases are more common than is generally known. Perhaps to nearly every one this knowledge was something of a tragedy of childhood, which has left its scar upon the un-

conscious psyche. This suspicion often accounts for the sex curiosity of children, and the strange shyness that often comes over them. Perhaps also it is one of the reasons for the resistance to knowledge which is so commonly manifest in religion. Is not knowledge closely identified with just this thing in the story of Eden? There are also many myths in which compensation is sought for this first great disillusionment of childhood. In such myths, notably the Cyrus story and the Œdipus myth, the actual parents are represented as mere foster parents. They are not the child's real father and mother, but are humble, even unlovely, people who are taking care of him until his real royal parenthood shall be revealed. Rank says that paranoics often have delusions of this nature, and analysis reveals the fact that such reveries are not uncommon in the daydreams of normal children.

The egoism of the child is hurt by the suspicion or knowledge of the nature of the bond between his parents. He, on the one hand, refuses to think of them as they are, for that is a way in which he is necessarily excluded from the secret of their love. So he invents noble and far-away parents, and this sense of

injured self-feeling may be discovered in the common mythological notion that the parents for one reason or another strove to get rid of the child and so exposed it. Again, the feeling of inferiority which the child experiences during this period is by use of a common mechanism "projected"—that is, it is transferred from the subject himself to the persons of his environment. Hence it is not our little egoist hungering for love who is inferior; it is the parents who now appear in the rôle of humble peasants—mere foster parents.

Often the child becomes attached to one parent and competes with the other for the love of the first. This situation is said by psychopathologists to be common. In the case of the boy who thus claims the affection of the mother there is the beginning of what is called the Œdipus complex. Various ramifications of this complex may occur. The boy may become very jealous of his father, may grow to hate and fear him. If in later life he is still unnaturally attracted to the mother image and is inclined to return to it as an unconscious protection and refuge when in difficulty, the fear and even hatred of the father may again appear in various forms of disguise. Again, one

may unconsciously identify himself with the father, and so feel secure in the thought of his mother's affection. When the reverse of this situation occurs—when the girl competes with her mother for the affection of the father—we have what is called "the Electra complex." Many forms of this infantile fixation upon the parents appear in neuroses. We shall see that they also play an important rôle in religion, and are deeply imbedded in the religious use of the father image. Curiously, it would appear that religion retains this childhood image of the father as its central symbol, while at the same time every person must in a sense detach himself from it, master it, in order to reach his mental maturity.

We naturally ask, then, why does religion uniformly retain in adult life a symbol which necessarily involves conflict? The answer is that much of religion has its roots in this very conflict itself, and is an attempt to solve it. The human spirit needs the father image. The knowledge of which I have spoken—as in the Eden story—thrusts the child out of his infantile paradise. Before that all was "innocent." He had all things through the love of his parents. In this he was secure, free from

responsibility, with no problems to solve, no effort required of him. From this time on he must make in ever increasing degree and with greater risk, his own orientations to his world. Life will demand more and more of him. The radius of the environment to which he must adapt himself begins to widen. Never again may he enjoy the absolute sense of security and self-importance which he once had when an unquestioned parental affection was wholly his, and loving care provided all his needs and shielded him from all harm. Men are all to some extent and in one way or another seeking to regain this lost paradise, and the desire appears in many forms, in dreams, in social ideals such as the return to nature, the "Golden Age," in Utopian fancies, in longing for the Millennium, and in the hope of heaven.

As the growing child is thus thrust out of the family circle and into the wider circle of the world, he naturally strives to conceive of the latter as a *family affair*. He wants or rather revives as an instrument of orientation to his larger world of tasks and duties, precisely that infantile father image which he once knew. Hence the father is "perfect," "all loving," and, according to what was once the child's

idea, a paternal image is set up in which fatherhood is independent of the functions of sex.

It is at the time of adolescence when the emotional equilibrium is shaken by the sudden realization of the fact of sex in one's own nature; when the developing individual finds himself at once a new being and faced with the tasks of adjustment to new interests and dangers, that religion has its greatest appeal. The pubic rites which are practiced among savages and the confirmation ceremonies among Christians are recognitions of this fact. Starbuck showed that the greatest number of conversions also occur during this period. The adolescent youth begins to doubt his powers, to compare himself with other people. He becomes shy and introspective, hesitating on the verge of his new world.

In this crisis early emotional fixations tend to make their presence manifest. The images associated with such fixations are revived. Impulses inadequately repressed in childhood assert themselves. Commonly the unconscious seeks to make the transition as easy as possible. It strives to meet new situations with accustomed modes of thought and behavior. It would make itself at home in the adult world in

a way similar to that which gave it security in early childhood. The new environment is rendered familiar by the use of symbols drawn from childhood's family relationships. The big world, too, is a family. There is an unseen Father—"Father, I cry to Thee"; "He leadeth me, oh, blessed thought, oh, words with heavenly comfort fraught"; "I'm the child of a King"; "Hold Thou my hand, dear Lord." "He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep."

Thus new confidence is gained. The believer is enabled to give his interest to new objects by conceiving of his new environment in terms of that which he once as a little child trusted absolutely. Psychologists say that we always give our affection and trust to the object by identifying that object with the parent image. They call such a phenomenon a "transference." When the transference is not complete the individual feels himself inferior, perplexed, alone. When it fails altogether, as in the disease dementia præcox—also by the way, a phenomenon which occurs like religion most commonly in adolescence, there is what is called regression—a withdrawal of interest from the world of objects and a taking refuge in a dream

life in which the patient becomes as it were a little child again. *Thus the father image has the function of really leading the believer across from childhood experience to effective participation in adult life.*

We should then expect to find that great religious systems in which the Father occupies an all-important part would arise among peoples and races in which the Father is most dominant in real life. Such is evidently the case. Christianity, Judaism, Islamism, are of Mediterranean origin. I am suspicious of sweeping generalizations about the alleged psychological differences of races and nations. But there is one difference between the people of northern Europe and those about the Mediterranean sea, the importance of which should not be overlooked. I refer to the patriarchal organization of the family. In southern Europe and in the near East the authority of the father is much greater than in the Protestant north. This difference may be a mere cultural accident. Again it may be due in part to biological causes. It has often been observed that southern races reach the period of adolescence at an earlier age than is common among northerners. Hence the former are sexually more precocious. Mar-

riage usually takes place while the young husband and wife are still dependent economically and morally upon the father. It is not uncommon for the married sons and daughters to continue living in the father's house. A second generation of children grow up under the guidance of the head of the house. Placed as he is and for life in a position of authority over a large household, his word becomes law; he becomes, in fact, a ruler. The title to the wealth possessed by the family rests upon him till death. In times past this ownership even extended to power of life and death over his mature sons and daughters and their children.

The psychological effects of such an important sociological fact as this are many. The tenacity of the family bond is greater. Americans who travel in Latin countries are often impressed with this fact. I have had many occasions to see its effects in Jewish students. The most complete examples of the dominance of the father are of course to be found in Mohammedan countries, especially where polygamy prevails. Certainly the patriarchate supplies the father image in biblical literature. It is perhaps the basic fact in the social life of the ancient Hebrews. So deep rooted is this

image of the ideal father in the Hebrew mind that after hundreds of generations the people of that nation may be found speaking of themselves as "sons of Abraham," children of Israel."

It is not an exaggeration of this difference between the south and the north to say that the father has a position of prestige in the former which he does not enjoy in the latter. Among the British, especially, and to a great extent in Germany and Scandinavia, the family group tends to disintegrate with the marriage of the children—often long before. Boys are weaned from the home at an early age, and are sent away to school, where they have soon to shift for themselves. Marriage is often postponed until the bridegroom has won for himself the means necessary to "support a family." These facts account in part, I think, for what many writers speak of as the "individualism" of northern peoples. America is notoriously individualistic, and it is obvious that the family as a patriarchal institution has almost no existence here.

Where the father image looms large in experience there is a tendency always to defer to paternal authority. Men and women ac-

quire the habit of taking a filial attitude toward all authority, and of approaching the tasks and duties of life as if they were obeying the commandments of an imaginary father. Hence Christianity in southern Europe remains Catholic, institutional, hierarchical, symbolic, authoritarian. In the north it tends to become mystical, moralistic, rationalistic, nonconformist. But we must not strive to make this geographical distinction too sharp. Similar mental traits exist in all people only in different degree. The father image received its greatest elaboration among the Mediterranean peoples, but the effects of the early relationship between the child and the father probably remain with us all throughout our lives and determine much of our thought and behavior.

I have said that religion makes use of the father image—the infantile symbol of the "perfect father" as an instrument which helps the believer orient himself to the situations that confront him in mature life. I also said that this father image is associated with an emotional conflict, since it is reminiscent of an early experience of disillusionment. While the psyche gains certain great advantages through thus conceiving of the world as a family affair,

the conflict which the father image suggests is revived in new form, and is often greatly intensified.

It is obvious that the childlike attitude which is made possible by the resuscitation of this useful fiction, can hardly be held in the midst of the experiences of mature life without suffering some pretty severe shocks. Like many other mechanisms of escape from the real, this one also must be defended by the elaboration of still further ideation until the thought-world demanded by the religious interest and the world of fact become often irreconcilable.

But this is only one phase of the conflict. It will be remembered that we said the child first becomes disillusioned about the father when he learns or begins to suspect that the function of paternity is the result of a mysterious secret between the parents. The ideal father during the subsequent years of childhood serves to compensate the ego for this first feeling of psychic loss. This compensation is achieved by a father ideal in which the sexual element is repressed. The symbol itself may thus be regarded as an expression of a revolt against the fact of sex. The sexual interest of the parents in each other is the evil which dispelled

the child's paradise. It is in part due to this that religion often shows such a feeling of antipathy to sex.

As the child approaches adolescence he begins to discover in himself the same force which his childish egoism led him to abolish from the image of the parents. He feels, therefore, that his own maturity is in conflict with the infantile father image through which he now adjusts himself to his world. In the attempt to solve this conflict we see a second and very important function of the father symbol—*the believer must be reconciled to the father.*

The process by which this reconciliation with the father is achieved is the very center of the religious interest. It is symbolically expressed in various renderings of the drama of sin and redemption, as we shall see in a later chapter. Just now let us confine our attention to the father image with which reconciliation is sought. I would first call attention to the fact that the conflicting emotional attitude toward the child's own father causes the father symbol to be split up, as it were, into two images: a "good" father in whose presence the believer feels himself by nature a sinner, and an "evil" father from whom he seeks to be de-

livered. These two images stand for what Freud calls an "ambivalent" attitude toward the loved and feared parent, and they are the survival of the early emotional experience of the child.

The ambivalent feeling toward people we love is not uncommon. And the device by which the same figure may be thought of as two persons having opposite traits serves the psyche very well, in that it enables it to direct all its antipathy to one of these images with perfect impunity and loyalty so far as the other is concerned. In the case of the father image of religion the ambivalent feeling exists to some degree even toward the good father. Reverence is such a feeling; it is a fusion of the emotions of love and fear, a feeling which the child first experienced in the early years of its association with the male parent. The division of the father image into two images is common, as I indicated, both in mythology and among certain psycho-neurotics. Normal children often so disguise the father image by substituting an animal. The little boy who fears his father, often represses this fear and suddenly is observed to be afraid of dogs, for instance, or of an imaginary "black man," or

"bogey man." Analysis of children often reveals the fear of dogs, to be unconscious fear of the father for whose image that of the dog is substituted. Many of the animals that appear in primitive religion also doubtless have such a significance. The totem animal is probably, among other things, such a disguised father symbol. Indication of this is seen in the taboo against the youth of the tribe marrying a woman who possesses the same totem. Such marriage is thought to be incestuous. Freud, as we shall see later, argues that in primitive times all the females of the tribe or family group belonged to the patriarch. The disguise of the father image as an animal points to a still further disguise of it as the evil father—the devil.

The devil occupies an important place in Christian symbolism. Cruden's Concordance to the Bible contains the following interesting definition: "A most wicked angel, the implacable enemy and tempter of the human race, especially believers whom he desires to devour." In the New Testament he is "Satan"—"the Adversary." He is the "Prince of Darkness," "Beelzebub," the "Dragon," "the Old Serpent," a "sinner from the beginning," the

"father of liars." He seeks to tempt the Christ in the wilderness. He puts it in the heart of Judas—who is himself once spoken of as a devil—to betray the Christ. He sets snares to entrap the faithful. He is said to "possess" persons whom now we should judge insane.

In the middle ages people's minds seem to have been especially occupied with the idea of the devil. Witchcraft, black art, sin, heresy, and schism were all his work. Miracles were attributed to him. Many humorous stories are related of his doings. He is the theme of Milton's "Paradise Lost," and of the Faustus legend.

Let us notice some of the mythological ideas which survived in this image. There is Pluto, the ancient "God of the Underworld." We learn from psychopathology that the underworld—the "lower regions"—has a pretty definite symbolic meaning. It stands for the repressed, inhibited impulses. There is again a vestige of the old god Vulcan in the idea of the devil. Vulcan is associated with fire, a common sex symbol, but in this case it is lower, hidden fire. And Vulcan is ridiculous—when the Olympian gods see him they always laugh. We detect here a hint of the same thing which

causes plebeians and children to regard certain bodily functions and organs as amusing. Obscenity is a mechanism through which consciousness may entertain a forbidden idea—by covering it with ridicule. And there are survivals of Dionysius in the image of the devil. The cloven hoof, the horns and tail and beard have all been retained. Dionysius was to the ancients the deity of animal life and function. The symbol of Dionysius was the goat, and here we clearly see the father image again disguised as an animal. The serpent is also such an image.

Finally, the devil has something in common with Prometheus, the Titan. Both are enemies of the High Father. Each possesses a sort of dark wisdom. Each is a "fire-bringer." In a word, we have here the ambivalent father symbol of ancient mythology still extant in many of its forms in monotheistic Christendom. This same psychological origin of the symbol appears in such popular terms as "the Old Harry," "Old Nick," "the Bad Man," "the Old Boy Himself." We do not need to seek far now to discover who the "Old Boy" is. The evil father is as truly a father symbol as the Heavenly Father. Each is in its way

an original expression of an all-or-none type of reaction. The child's father must be all good or all bad. And while these opposite feelings give rise to contrasting symbols, the figure of the male parent appears in both, and when taken over by the religious interest, they are often closely related. Both are supernatural beings. The evil father, too, once existed in heaven, but he fell. His chief occupation now is in criticising and resisting the good father—that is, he stands as an expression of those psychic factors in the heart of the believer which are in unconscious opposition to the ideal of "Goodness" with which that image is identified.

The devil is then the reverse side of the ideal father image, and as such has value for the unconscious. This image, the devil, serves the function of "displacement"—that is, it makes it possible to entertain certain unwelcome feelings toward a person by substituting for the true object of such feelings another image with whom the first is unconsciously identified. This phenomenon often occurs in our dreams. It is common in the witticisms of the vulgar. The infantile image of the evil father draws to itself certain feelings and judgments which would

otherwise be directed toward the real father and enables the child to construct the image of the ideal parent which may thus become a religious symbol inspiring confidence, love, and trust. But the factors which are suppressed in the image of the perfect father later come to exist in the developing individual himself.

This leads us to a second function of the evil father image. It serves as an instrument of "projection." By projection psychologists mean the habit of ascribing to another, feelings which we have ourselves. The paranoic patient may be obsessed by a homicidal feeling toward a friend or relative. He does not recognize such feeling as his own, but says, instead, that the person who is really the object of such desires entertains certain evil intentions toward himself. A common manifestation of the phenomenon of projection is our habit of blaming some one else for our own unfortunate behavior. So the evil tendencies in our nature may be thought of as not our own. The devil tempted us. He is to blame. It is he, not we, who is the enemy of the loving father and is ever prone to evil. Thus by casting our sins upon the evil one, by erecting a father image whom we may laugh at and oppose

with good conscience, by projecting upon this image the feeling of inferiority which we may unconsciously entertain toward ourselves, the unconscious seeks to solve its conflict with the father image. It may in this way get revenge over the father symbol, show its hostility openly, and be quite unaware of the fact that the real object of the fear, scorn, and revenge is the same paternal figure who appears differently disguised as the Father above.

What I have just said is an account of only one phase of the attempt to solve the conflict created by the religious use of the father symbol. It is the most obvious and we might say most infantile way of reaching a solution. In themselves the mechanisms of displacement and projection are not adequate solutions of the conflict. The believer still feels the need of transference. There remains the image of the Perfect Father, and in the degree that all human feelings and natural functions are abstracted from this image and are projected upon the person of the devil, the believer feels himself to be a sinful being in the presence of this Perfection. The believer still feels that his own nature is corrupt and sinful. The very elements which he cannot think of in the Father

he feels are in himself hostile to the Father. There must be reconciliation with the Father, or that feeling of trust and love which I have called transference is impossible. Self-appreciation shrivels. The believer is a "lost soul." This feeling is intensified by a trait which I earlier pointed out and concerning which we shall have more to say later—the attempt of the ego to regain its childhood paradise. This emotional looking backward is known in psychopathology as the "infantile return." It is common in cases where the emotional interest is fixed upon the parents, and often assumes the imagery of a return to the love of the mother. When, as frequently happens, the child is deeply attached to the mother, and as a consequence has experienced a feeling of fear or dislike of the father, this attempt to regain the lost mother-child relationship results in serious difficulty with the father image in whatever form it is retained.

There is an element of this infantile return in religion. Certainly it appears in Christianity. "Ye must be born again." "Whosoever shall not receive the Kingdom of God as a little child, he shall in no wise enter therein." The need of reconciliation with the father is, there-

fore, in one sense a phase of the Œdipus complex.

The image of the Father, constructed out of childhood's fancy in order to enable the adult to meet with greater confidence the tasks and dangers of life and to retain through possible failure his inner personality-picture or defense against the feeling of inferiority, results in exchanging for the struggle between the psyche and its environment a deeper struggle between the psyche and its father image. The Father must be "propitiated." The believer seeks the forgiveness of his father image. Perhaps the forgiveness here sought is in part the believer's own longing to forgive his father, a wish for a rebinding of a tie broken long ago in the hour of the child's first disillusionment about the parent image. Thus we are led through a study of this symbol to a view of the hidden efforts at self-valuation of the ego during the tortuous course of its detachment, development, and self-maintenance in an environment of mingled fancy and fact.

Perhaps all that I have pointed out concerning the father image would exist as psychological fact even if religion were of modern origin. But the great symbols of religion are

handed down from primitive times and contain traditional elements of the father image, in which there are features which humanity has now outgrown. The father image in religious tradition modifies the symbol of contemporary infantile experience. Our professions of faith are a mingling of the two, and the primitive father out of experience with whom men first created the symbol was hardly the civilized, kindly-mannered being whom most of us have known and idealized—the good citizen who toiled to provide for his children's wants, took them to church on Sunday, and instructed them by word and example in the ways of polite society.

For this primitive father also, primitive children doubtless had affection. They must have wondered at his feats of strength, and enjoyed his protection from dangers more menacing and obvious than those of to-day. But if such were the case, the conflict between the early ideal of him and later experience must have been very great. The anthropologists do not give us a uniformly beautiful picture of primitive man. Wells has tried to make this picture graphic by a vivid description of primitive family life as anthropologists conceive of

it. He shows us a group of brown-skinned savages sitting about a "squatting ring" in some dark naturally sheltered place." The leader of this circle—the primitive family—the father, or "old man," is in some respects more like the chief of a small savage tribe than a father. His will is law, all the women about the circle are his wives, most of whom it may be assumed he has captured. All other males are beaten off and made to keep their distance. The same, as Freud in *Totem and Taboo* has shown, is the treatment given to his growing sons. As they mature they are ever under his jealous, watchful eye. He commands them with power of life and death, brutally punishes them, eats all the best food, makes the women his slaves, compels them to drudgery, and when the sons reach sex maturity holds them in restraint through physical violence and the power of dreadful taboos, and soon drives them off to shift for themselves. They revere him, hold his person sacred, yet fear and hate him, and feel that their very dawning manhood is an offense to him.

Perhaps this picture is overdrawn, yet it must be true that humanity has passed through dreadful experiences in the long dark past—

when early civilization was being formed out of the clash of pure animal impulses. At any rate, Freud holds that such a situation once existed, and that often the revolt against the father must have resulted in open violence between him and his grown sons. He finds the origin of the blood sacrifice in those occasions when the father was killed by his sons. The emotional effects of such an experience Freud thinks were very far-reaching. Later the event was symbolized by the killing of the totem animal as a father image. Out of this symbolic rite it is said the sacrifice arose. It is a device for reconciliation with the father. The animal—who symbolizes the father—is killed and eaten. Thus the hostility, the death wish, toward the father is expressed and satisfied vicariously, the guilt is shared by all, and in the eating of the flesh of the sacrificial animal there is a crude expression of identification with that for which it stands—the father.

It should be said that if Freud means to offer the killing of the totem animal as an explanation of the origin of sacrifice in general, his explanation is inadequate. There is a sacrificial tradition in which there would appear to be no trace either of the father image or

of the sense of sin. In addition to the "sin offering" concerning which Freud gives us this psychological account, the ancient world had the widespread custom of pouring out libations, offering the first fruits at the harvest, offering a portion to the deity on the occasion of a feast or even at the time of daily partaking of food. Thus by a sort of sacrificial ceremony many actions which we moderns regard as commonplace were by the ancients held to be religious acts.

Thus the Hebrews had two terms for the sacrifice. The sin offering they called the "Zebach." The other sacrifice they called the "Mincha." Even to-day the Mincha survives as a sort of grace before meals. It would lead us too far afield to attempt here a psychological discussion of the sacrificial custom which is represented by the Mincha. In a sense it belongs to the general subject of ceremonialism, which we will discuss in a later chapter. There is another sense in which this sacrificial custom is, especially in Aryan usage, pantheistic, and would seem to symbolize the reconciliation of the individual to his world by making the daily routine of life a sort of "communion," by realizing the divine presence in all things, and by

dissolving all distinctions. The most elaborate expression of this type of sacrifice was perhaps the Dionysian cult. In contrast with this, the Zebach, or sin-offering, involves the killing of an animal, the shedding of blood; and it is significant that with this latter sacrificial custom the father image seems to have been habitually associated.

Freud, moreover, doubtless errs in thinking of the origin of the blood sacrifice as an actual event. It need have been no more than a wish commonly felt, which came to be expressed in symbolic form. But the sacrifice, as we shall see later, is a method of reconciliation of antipathy to the father, with a wish to be like him—one with him. We are often told that the sacrifice is designed to propitiate the Father by the giving up of something to him. There is more in it than this. It is a "mystery," a dreadful and solemn rite. The Hebrews in the great sin offering at "Yom Kippur" slew a bull, and the bull was, in all probability, once the symbol of Jehovah, the Father. It is said that "without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sin." When we contemplate the Christian idea of the sacrificial death of Christ, it is significant that the Christ of the

Fourth Gospel says, "I and my Father are one." The eating of the bread and the drinking of the sacramental wine are still spoken of as partaking of the body and the blood of the Lord. Surely there are elements in this sacramental rite which must be very old, and stand as symbols of things in us which do not emerge into the believer's full consciousness.

As the primitive father passes in the course of human progress out of actual experience and a more ideal father image stands as an appreciation of deity, the cruder forms of sacrificial ceremony tend to be discontinued. But though reconciliation with the father through sacrificial ritual persists, more inward and "spiritual" modes of reconciliation are sought. The primitive wish for the death of the father, and for his continued existence as renewal of life and strength in the sons, recedes into the dim background of forgotten racial tradition. Only vestiges of the idea remain to give traditional setting to the ever-present wish for reconciliation to an image which is necessary for orientation to this world, yet is reminiscent of many emotional conflicts. *What the religious interest strives to do is to preserve intact an infantile image of the ideal father, perfect and "pure"*

*and sinless, and at the same time render this image tolerant and "forgiving" of the existence in the believer of the very "sinful nature" in himself which his infantile egoism struck out of the image of the perfect one.* Hence, psychologically speaking, reconciliation with the father means *reconciliation of our infantile jealousy with the fact of our own maturity.*

# V

## *Sin and Redemption*

RECONCILIATION with the father image is the great quest of the religious spirit. St. Paul speaks of the Christian Gospel as a "ministry of reconciliation," knowing well that his Corinthian readers would recognize the longing for which he brought them a message of satisfaction. The story of the "prodigal son" returning to his father's house has universal appeal, and the figure of the Christ on the cross offering his life for the sins of the world, that men might be reconciled to the father, is a symbol of the central fact of religious experience, Christian and non-Christian alike. The psyche, having created for itself the ideal father image, seeks a return to a lost sense of peace and love from which it feels itself shut off by the contrast between the "purity" of the restored infantile ideal of the parent and the facts of its own nature. Hence the natural man is "at enmity" with God.

The reconciliation so sought appears to consciousness as the need of the Father's love. Unconsciously, it is a need which arises out of the believer's own difficulty in loving his father. This fact sometimes appears in the "confessions" of religious people who say that before conversion they did not love God and were miserable.

> "I was a wandering sheep,
> I did not love the fold;
> I did not love my Shepherd's voice,
> I would not be controlled."

Beneath this conflict with the father image we have discovered the conflict between the infantile ego to which return is sought and the mature self-feeling. The former contains impulses and desires which the latter has learned to repress because they are anti-social; they have been given the "bad conscience." The latter is in conflict with the father ideal which the religious interest revives and uses as a symbol of Deity. Out of this conflict grows the sense of sin. The function of religion is therefore *escape from sin.*

From the standpoint of psychology we may regard Christianity as first of all a device for ridding the ego of that feeling of inferiority

which we speak of as "conviction of sin." But redemption from sin is the task of religion generally. The motive is seen in those primitive rites with which savages seek to purge their community, to remove the curse and render the Deity propitious. The great sacrificial ritual of the Hebrews on the Day of Atonement has the same purpose. Buddhism is a path of life which the believer may follow toward the same goal. In the Bible there is probably no word so often repeated as the word sin: "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow"; "Blessed is he whose sin is covered"; "In sin did my mother conceive me." I call attention to the last passage because it has especial bearing upon what I have said about the infantile parent ideal.

The theme of the Fourth Gospel may be expressed in the sentence: "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." This phrase "the sin of the world," indicates something of the meaning which the word "sin" has for the religious mind. There is a sense of a primordial curse both upon the believer and upon the natural objects of his interest. To moderns the evil in the world is often conceived to be rather superficial. It is error

or it is deliberate immoral behavior which may be corrected by punishment, education, or legislation. Man is often thought of as "the product of his environment." It is said, give him wholesome surroundings and he will be good. If anyone is bad, he evidently has not had adequate opportunities to develop himself. Society is at fault. Sin is but a function of social indifference or is wholly contingent upon our forms of social organization.

This is not the view of sin taken by religious people. It is a deadening, world-destroying blight. It is a cancer in the cosmos, a hidden worm gnawing into and corrupting the heart of man. So deep and irradicable is this curse upon us all that it is felt to reach, to bite into, the very core of reality itself. It pierces the very side of Incarnate Deity. The symbol of the God on the cross is a figurative way of saying that the sense of sin which stands between the believer and his Father image is a tragic fact indeed, and may only be removed in a most dreadful manner—by the death and renewal of life of Deity itself—in other words, by a "new creation."

So far as the doctrine of sin is a reflection upon human nature, in one sense—a Freudian

sense—it is probably nearer the truth than that optimistic humanitarian idealization of man in general which is characteristic of a democratic age, which is also (like the idea of redemption), a protest against the feeling of inferiority. But the idea of the sinful state of man must not be confused with a similar unflattering view of our nature which might be held by a theoretical pessimist. Pessimism as a philosophy is to some extent a logical deduction from the facts. The idea of sin is not based upon logic, it is the expression of an inner unconscious conflict. If things ran more smoothly in this world, and the behavior of men gave more promise of the achievement of a satisfactory common life, the pessimist would be forced to modify his conclusions. In fact, every human achievement stands as a partial refutation of pessimism. Not so the feeling of sin; however great man's achievement may be, it is vanity. It is only the more open and flagrant exhibition of willful pride; it is still "worldly," an unregenerate manifestation of sinful human nature, a Tower of Babel destined to provoke divine wrath.

Religious people have done much to encourage art, cultural advance, industry, and even

science, but the inspiration to improvement in these things does not come from religion itself. "Be not anxious for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink: nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. . . . If God doth so clothe the grass of the field which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you? . . . For after all these things do the Gentiles seek. . . . But seek ye first the kingdom and his righteousness. . . . . Be not therefore anxious for the morrow: for the morrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." [1]

Note in the sentences just quoted, the psychological elements about which I have been speaking. There is first the infantile return—simple child-like dependence upon the Heavenly Father for all things. Then there is—what psychologists have often observed goes with this feeling—a turning of interest away from the environment, a *de-valuation* of the things of the world. The concluding sentence is very instructive, "sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." Only the Kingdom of God is of value, that is, without submission to the ideal father image, the fruits of human effort are

[1] Matthew 6. Revised Version, Am. Ed., 1901.

worse than worthless. Their multiplication only adds to the evils already in existence. Do not add to these evils by taking thought for to-morrow; there are evils enough now.

As a poetic expression of trust in the Father ideal, this passage has supreme beauty. It is not, however, intended to inspire practical effort at improvement of the lot of man. And the reason, as I have pointed out, lies in the feeling that this world with all its works is evil. The idea that the present world is evil runs all through the New Testament. The feeling that every expression of sinful human nature only adds to the evil of this lost world perhaps accounts for a fact in the Christian Scripture that has often perplexed students.

While the Gospels are themselves great works of art, they yet reveal a strange indifference to what we commonly call cultural achievement. At the time these documents were written civilization had reached a high point of development. A Phidias and a Praxiteles and a Sophocles had lived. Science, at Alexandria, was making rapid advancement. In philosophy the teachings of some of the greatest thinkers of all times were accessible, through the use of Greek as the language of culture, to all

educated persons. The ability to appreciate these cultural elements is known by the educated to be essential to the spiritual life, and the writers of the New Testament were not ignorant men. Yet I can find nothing in the whole book which contains any encouragement of art or science or philosophy.

On the contrary, the author of the Apocalypse rejoices in the most lurid pictures of the contemplated ruin of ancient civilization.

> "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, and is become a habitation of devils, and a hold of every unclean spirit, and a hold of every unclean and hateful bird. . . . And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come forth, my people, out of her, that ye have no fellowship with her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues: for her sins have reached even unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. Render unto her even as she rendered, and double unto her the double according to her works: in the cup which she mingled, mingle unto her double. How much soever she glorified herself, and waxed wanton, so much give her of torment and mourning: for she saith in her

heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall in no wise see mourning. Therefore in one day shall her plagues come, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire; for strong is the Lord God who judged her. And the kings of the earth, who committed fornication and lived wantonly with her, shall weep and wail over her, when they look upon the smoke of her burning, standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Woe, woe, the great city, Babylon, the strong city! for in one hour is thy judgment come. And the merchants of the earth weep and mourn over her, for no man buyeth their merchandise any more; merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stone, and pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet; and all thyine wood, and every vessel of ivory, and every vessel made of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble; . . . And the fruits which thy soul lusted after are gone from thee, and all things that were dainty and sumptuous are perished from thee, and men shall find them no more. . . . Rejoice

> over her, thou heaven, and ye saints, and ye apostles, and ye prophets; for God hath judged your judgment on her." [1]

"Babylon" in this passage is Hellenistic civilization, into which the genius of Rome was bringing law and order. This world, over the ruins of which the seer of vision gloats in ecstacy is the world of Seneca and Horace and Virgil, of Plutarch and Plato, of Lucian and Tacitus; a world which contained the Colossus of Rhodes, the splendors of the Forum and the Capitoline, the great Alexandrian Library, the Parthenon of Athens, the Aphrodite of Milos.

But it will be said all this ancient culture was but one side of the picture. Against it we should array the decadence and cruelty and vice and slavery and political corruption which led to the downfall of imperial Rome. I do not wish to be drawn into an historical discussion at this point. But I am sure that the "wickedness" of the ancient world has been somewhat exaggerated by the fathers of the church in their zeal for their own propaganda. If the socialists should ever succeed in overthrowing our "capitalist" civilization, I imagine that the

[1] The Book of Revelation, ch. 18.

picture of our age which would be handed down by them to future generations would be as unflattering as is our early Christian picture of ancient civilization. My point is that while evils great and glaring of course existed in that world—as they will doubtless exist in all that is human—there is a psychological reason why they should be thus emphasized in the religious view of the world. Men do not, on strictly logical or moral ground, condemn an entire civilization because of the evils which exist in it. Such condemnation of the world is motivated from within. The *"sin of the world" is primarily a projection* of the conflict with sin in the believer's heart. In all our total reactions to the world, we are looking out through what has unconsciously accumulated upon our own windowpanes. Such reflections are indicative of our spiritual housekeeping. When such a judgment upon the world is translated into the language of psychology, it is seen not to be merely a deduction from objective fact; it is also an autobiographical statement.

The feeling that the objective world is meaningless, worthless, evil, is often interwoven with the "sinner's" sense of his own unworthiness. The two feelings are essentially related, as we

shall see later. A similar coupling of a renunciation of the world together with a feeling of despair of self occurs in certain "non-transference neuroses," such as dementia præcox and manic-depressive insanity. James was struck with the likeness between the "conviction of sin" and the melancholia of the psychopathic patient. In *The Varieties of Religious Experience* he says:

> "In melancholics there is usually a similar change, only it is in the reverse direction. The world now looks remote, strange, sinister, uncanny. Its color is gone, its breath is cold. There is no speculation in the eyes it glares with. "It is as if I lived in another century," says one asylum patient. "I see everything through a cloud," says another; "things are not as they were, and I am changed." "I see," says a third, "I touch, but the things do not come near me, a thick veil alters the hue and look of everything." "Persons move like shadows, and sounds seem to come from a distant world." "There is no longer any past for me; people appear so strange; it is as if I could not see any

reality, as if I were in a theater; as if people were actors, and everything were scenery; I can no longer find myself; I walk, but why? Everything floats before my eyes, but leaves no impression." "I weep false tears, I have unreal hands: the things I see are not real things." Such are expressions that naturally arise to the lips of melancholic subjects describing their changed state.

"Now there are some subjects whom all this leaves a prey to the profoundest astonishment. The strangeness is wrong. The unreality cannot be. A mystery is concealed, and a metaphysical solution must exist. If the natural world is so double-faced and unhomelike, what world, what thing is real? An urgent wondering and questioning is set up, a poring theoretic activity, and in the desperate effort to get into right relations with the matter, the sufferer is often led to what becomes for him a satisfying religious solution." . . .[1]

The depression and sense of personal unfitness, the withdrawal of interest from the object,

[1] *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, pp. 150-151.

which occur in the psycho-neurosis, are not necessarily caused by any concrete experience or misdeed. There may be nothing other than the unconscious wish-fancy between which and the self-feeling the defense barriers have broken down. Often the patient may accuse himself of certain evil deeds, but these are usually regarded as substitutes and symbols of the hidden wish.

In the religious feeling of sin, the same may be true. One need not find his conscious memory burdened with guilt and shame over some definitely immoral act in order to feel very intense consciousness of sin. The very word "sin" is a "complex" word for most people. This fact is clearly revealed in the average person's response to the Jung word-association test. In this experiment a test word is given by the experimenter and the subject is asked to respond with the first word which comes to his lips. The time required for response is found to vary. Words which touch associational systems in which there is emotional repression, require a longer association time: and the response word where any is finally given, ordinarily shows a different association process from that which is typical of the subject's normal

reactions. The word "sin" is almost invariably a "complex" word of this kind. Often the subject has no conscious associations with it at all; his mind remains a blank. He is perplexed, or embarrassed, or he laughs. The existence of this "complex" in regard to the word "sin" does not necessarily indicate that one is troubled with a guilty conscience over any definite thing he may have done.

In fact those who experience most intensely the feeling of sin are usually persons of rather good moral reputation. Often they can point to no specific evil deed as the cause of this feeling of guilt and depression. When in certain "confessions" such past misdeeds are mentioned, one is inclined to look upon the reference to them as an attempt to rationalize—give some intelligible account of the reason for this general feeling of self-depression. So far from pointing to anything specific, this feeling of sinfulness is usually very vague. It is in this respect like the feeling which people normally often have when they say: "I feel depressed to-day. I don't know just why; there is no reason for it, but I feel as if something dreadful were going to happen."

On the other hand, people may experience a

"bad conscience," may deeply regret and deplore certain of their acts and have no sense of sin at all. They may perform the most socially injurious deeds and, if they have any sense of guilt, may master or disguise the fact quite successfully, while their consciences may trouble them for many days after some trivial act like playing cards on Sunday. Thus the causal connections between sinfulness and behavior are difficult to trace. Homer's Hellenic warriors kill and steal and make slaves of their neighbors with good conscience, but are plunged into despair and feel themselves accursed because Agamemnon has unwittingly slain wild animals in the sacred grove of Artemis. The Iliad begins with the account of the wrath of the gods upon the Greeks during the long siege of Troy. The heroes have quarreled over the possession of a captive maiden. Achilles sulks in his tent, and a plague has been visited upon the army. This visitation has come upon them not because they are guilty of murder and rape, but because, unfortunately, they have captured the daughter of a priest of Apollo.

An act may be very "sinful" in one age or region of the earth, and not at all so in another—for instance, drinking wine, gambling,

eating meat or going hunting on certain days of the week. Where things of such nature are regarded as sinful, it is doubtless because the feeling of sinfulness is already vaguely present and is waiting to attach itself to any object which may serve as its apparent cause. It would seem that the guilty feeling as consciousness of sin has no necessary relation to right and wrong rationally considered.

*Sin is, therefore, not the same as immorality,* though the two are often apparently identified in the effort to give to moral convention the sanction of religious institutions.

The moral criteria of behavior grow out of the fact that adjustment to environment must be made on the social scale. As men in any group are permanently in one another's environment, and as effective behavior is possible only when the environment to which adjustment is made has some stability or regularity, so the necessity of mutual adaptation results in reducing the behavior of all to some form of habit. Thus men may predict to some degree and in respects which are of mutual concern, the behavior of their fellows. The habits so engendered become fixed in tradition. It is not implied that considerations of utility have con-

sciously prompted the formation of such habits. They may have been motivated by all sorts of fictions and unconscious needs. Thrown out like advantageous variations in the natural world, they need only possess some measure of survival value. Those groups which formed the most advantageous habits and customs tended to survive, prosper, and supplant their less fortunate neighbors.

Moral ideas become universal, prompting certain modes of behavior toward all mankind only as experience and contemplation extend the radius of the social environment from the primitive family circle or tribal group to humanity in general. This process, starting with the primitive family—as in the case of religion—tends to cause men to conceive of the social, as such, in terms of an imagery which is made out of the experience of the family. Moral ideas, therefore, retain such "domestic" elements as fraternity, obedience, etc. And to most men the standard of right and the criterion of moral self-approval remain little more than intuitions that certain forms of behavior are approved by those about one. Nevertheless, the basis of the moral judgment, in the difference between adequate and inadequate

adjustment to environment, holds throughout. Even Kant with all his "metaphysics of morals" is unable to escape this unrecognized utilitarian fact. For adequate moral adjustment, however, there need be no absolute, no categorical imperative, no criterion other than that which inevitably appears in the results of our behavior when viewed as adjustment to the situation wisely considered. The judgment that we have acted in ways that are morally wrong—when on rare occasions we pass this judgment upon ourselves rather than upon our neighbors—is chiefly an affair of the intellect. It is a scrutinizing of the concrete results of our behavior with some knowledge of the adequacy of that behavior as adjustment to objective situations, natural and social. There is also the consciousness—and this is part of the question of adjustment—that our fellow men approve or disapprove of us.

This is a very different thing from the feeling of sin. The idea of sin reaches beyond the social, and may even condemn it. There is a feeling in the heart of the sinner that he has violated something sacred, that *his very nature is an offense.* Hence the sin is grounded in the psyche itself, not in the act performed, as is

the case in the moral judgment. The sinner feels that he is a rebel against the Father. Sin has been defined as any disobedience of, or want of conformity unto, the law of God. One feels himself a sinner not because of something he *does*, but because of what he *is*, or feels himself to be. "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." The sin from which escape is sought through religion is *"original sin."*

The following passages which I quote from William James's *Varieties of Religious Experience* will illustrate my point. James used these documents as examples of "soul sickness," or religious melancholy. His argument seems to be that the feeling of the great and imminent reality of evil in these cases is a more profound insight into the nature of life than is possessed by the more optimistic type of believer.

He says:[1]

> "The completest religions would therefore seem to be those in which the pessimistic elements are best developed. Buddhism, of course, and Christianity are the best known to us of these. They are essentially

[1] *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 165.

religions of deliverance; the man must die to an unreal life before he can be born into the real life. . . .

"The normal process of life contains moments as bad as any of those which insane melancholy is filled with, moments in which radical evil gets its innings and takes its solid turn. The lunatic's visions of horror are all drawn from the material of daily fact. Our civilization is founded on the shambles, and every individual existence goes out in a lonely spasm of helpless agony. If you protest, my friend, wait till you arrive there yourself! To believe in the carnivorous reptiles of geologic times is hard for our imagination—they seem too much like mere museum specimens. Yet there is no tooth in any one of those museum-skulls that did not daily through long years of the foretime hold fast to the body struggling in despair of some fated living victim. Forms of horror just as dreadful to their victims, if on a smaller spatial scale, fill the world about us to-day. Here on our very hearths and in our gardens the infernal cat plays with the panting mouse, or holds the hot bird

fluttering in her jaws. Crocodiles and rattlesnakes and pythons are at this moment vessels of life as real as we are; their loathsome existence fills every minute of every day that drags its length along; and whenever they or other wild beasts clutch their living prey, the deadly horror which an agitated melancholic feels is the literally right reaction on the situation.[1] . . .

"It may indeed be that no religious reconciliation with the absolute totality of things is possible. Some evils, indeed, are ministerial to higher forms of good; but it may be that there are forms of evil so extreme as to enter into no good system whatsoever, and that, in respect of such evil, dumb submission or neglect to notice is the only practical resource. But provisionally, and as a mere matter of program and method, since the evil facts are as genuine parts of nature as the good ones, the philosophic presumption should be that they have some rational significance, and that systematic healthy-mindedness, failing as it does to accord to sor-

[1] P. 163.

row, pain, and death any positive and active attention whatever, is formally less complete than systems that try at least to include these elements in their scope.

This might lead us to the conclusion that melancholia and the feeling of sin are logical deductions from fact. Such however is not the case. James points out the fact that the problem of religious melancholy leads us to a consideration of cases which are clearly psychopathic. He says:[1]

> "In none of these cases was there any intellectual insanity or delusion about matters of fact; but were we disposed to open the chapter of really insane melancholia, with its hallucinations and delusions, it would be a worse story still—desperation absolute and complete, the whole universe coagulating about the sufferer into a material of overwhelming horror, surrounding him without opening or end. Not the conception or intellectual perception of evil, but the grisly, blood-freezing, heart-palsying sensation of it close upon one, and no other conception or sensation able to live for a moment in its presence. How

[1] *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 161.

> irrelevantly remote seem all our usual refined optimisms and intellectual and moral consolations in presence of a need of help like this! Here is the real core of the religious problem: Help! help!"

James cites numerous religious "confessions" in order to show how closely this feeling of sin is related to psychopathic melancholia.

Our interest in quoting these documents is to discover if in them there is the failure to "transfer" through the father image which I have said gives rise to the feeling of sin.

The first case is that of Tolstoy:

> "I felt," says Tolstoy, "that something had broken within me on which my life had always rested, that I had nothing left to hold on to, and that morally my life had stopped. An invisible force impelled me to get rid of my existence, in one way or another. It cannot be said exactly that I wished to kill myself, for the force which drew me away from life was fuller more powerful, more general than any mere desire. It was a force like my old aspiration to live, only it impelled me in the opposite direction. It was an

aspiration of my whole being to get out of life.

"Behold me, then, a man happy and in good health, hiding the rope in order not to hang myself to the rafters of the room where every night I went to sleep alone; behold me no longer going shooting, lest I should yield to the too easy temptation of putting an end to myself with my gun. . . .

I did not know what I wanted. I was afraid of life; I was driven to leave it; and in spite of that I still hoped something from it. . . .

All this took place at a time when, so far as all my outer circumstances went, I ought to have been completely happy. I had a good wife who loved me and whom I loved; good children and a large property which was increasing with no pains taken on my part. I was more respected by my kinsfolk and acquaintances than I had ever been; I was loaded with praise by strangers and without exaggeration I could believe my name already famous. Moreover, I was neither insane nor ill. On the contrary, I possessed a physical

> and mental strength which I have rarely met in persons of my age. . . . During the whole course of this year, when I almost unceasingly kept asking myself how to end the business, whether by the rope or by the bullet, during all that time, alongside of all those movements of my ideas and observations, my heart kept languishing with another pining emotion. I can call this by no other name than that of a thirst for God. This craving for God had nothing to do with the movement of my ideas—in fact, it was the direct contrary of that movement—but it came from my heart. It was like a feeling of dread that made me seem like an orphan and isolated in the midst of all these things that were so foreign. And this feeling of dread was mitigated by the hope of finding the assistance of some one." [1]

Notice that Tolstoy says "I felt that something had broken within me on which my life had always depended." After the breakdown there is a suicide wish. There is a "force which drew me away from life." Tolstoy cannot account for this feeling. There is nothing

[1] *The Varieties of Religious Experience,* pp. 153, 156.

in his objective environment or his conscious life that will explain it—in other words, the feeling comes from facts of which the author is unconscious, and together with the feeling is another which he says "had nothing to do with the movement of my ideas—it came from my heart. . . . I can call this by no other name than that of a thirst for God—it was like a feeling of dread that made me *seem like an orphan.*"

This word "orphan" indicates the nature of the longing. It is a longing for a return to the father—a longing for the security and love of the child in the arms of its parents. But across the path stands the author's own nature which acts as a bar to transference to the father image.

Those who are acquainted with Tolstoy's life and writings will remember many instances of this conflict both before and after his "conversion." In the novel *The Cossacks,* written when the author was still in his twenties, there is evidence of this struggle. The hero, a young Russian nobleman, goes to live in the Caucasus. The account of his experiences is given with that vivid sensual imagery which we always find in Tolstoy's writings. Color and

movement, smell and taste and sound, the contour and grace of the human body, are all brought vividly before the reader. We are told the story of the young nobleman watching for days the movements of a buxom young female member of the household in which he lived. He is fascinated to see her out in the yard wearing a blue dress which reveals the lines of her form. He is tremendously stimulated, but the erotic impulse toward the young woman is purely sensual. There seems to be no real transference.

The hero makes a futile attempt to approach the object of his desire, but is confused and oppressed with a sense of failure. After that he goes out alone and spends the day in the forest. There the emotional release which he has vainly sought through the senses comes to him. He experiences a flood of peace and love and ecstatic joy. But strangely, the object of this emotional attachment does not appear in consciousness. It is not the young woman. He has now given her up. The object of the hero's love is himself. Tolstoy here shows a narcissistic or autoerotic type of emotional reaction which

is common to persons who do not transfer easily to the object.

As I turn over in my mind Tolstoy's books, I cannot remember a single instance in which one of his autobiographical heroes succeeds in gaining a true transference. The love of man and woman is with Tolstoy never more than a sensual attraction. There is always a sense of its futility, therefore. Ecstacy is possible to this writer only in preoccupation with the ego itself. While probably no writer of fiction was ever more sensual than Tolstoy, yet he is always struggling to escape the slavery of sense, precisely because to him it is slavery. The inner psyche holds aloof, cannot give itself, is forever chained to its own image. The result is—what commonly occurs in certain neuroses—a regression, a "turning back of the libido" to the infantile ego itself—a consequent negation of sense and its object—growing antipathy toward sex as object love.

This is the theme of *Anna Karenina,* of *The Kreutzer Sonata, The Resurrection,* and of all the religious tracts written by the great Russian up to the time when his denial of life and the world reached its culmination just before his death. In *War and Peace,* it will be remem-

bered that Andrei finds his only moment of ecstacy as he lies dying on the battlefield; here the wish to return to the parent is finally realized. So in the novel, *Anna Karenina,* Levin the husband and householder, never finds complete joy in the experiences and tasks of his daily life. It is only in rare moments when he is out alone in the harvest field, when he can escape from the world into himself, that he is really happy. The moment his human relationships are brought back to him, he loses his sense of peace, is astonished that he can so soon and for so little reason be irritated with his fellow beings. So Tolstoy's struggle with the feeling of sin, episodic as it was, was not so sudden and inexplicable an experience as he thought. The conflict was always there. He was able to solve the conflict only by a surrender of that which stood in the way of his transference.

Illustrations of a similar inability to transfer may be seen in the following examples. In each case, the author is obviously suffering with the affliction known as manic-depressive insanity—though neither patient seems here to show the delusions which often accompany this emotional disturbance.

"I had such a universal terror that I woke at night with a start, thinking that the Pantheon was tumbling on the Polytechnic School, or that the school was in flames, or that the Seine was pouring into the Catacombs and that Paris was being swallowed up. And when these impressions were past, all day long without respite I suffered an incurable and intolerable desolation, verging on despair. I thought myself, in fact, rejected by God, lost, damned! I felt something like the suffering of hell. Before that I had never even thought of hell. My mind had never turned in that direction. Neither discourses nor reflections had impressed me in that way. I took no account of hell. Now, and all at once, I suffered in a measure what is suffered there. . . .

"But what was perhaps still more dreadful is that every idea of heaven was taken away from me; I could no longer conceive of anything of the sort." [1]

An uneducated domestic servant, aged nineteen, poisons herself, and leaves two letters

[1] *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 146.

expressing her motive for the act. To her parents she writes:

> "Life is sweet perhaps to some, but I prefer what is sweeter than life, and that is death. So good-by forever, my dear parents. It is nobody's fault, but a strong desire of my own which I have longed to fulfil for three or four years. I have always had a hope that some day I might have an opportunity of fulfilling it, and now it has come. . . . It is a wonder I have put this off so long, but I thought perhaps I should cheer up a bit and put all thought out of my head." To her brother she writes: "Good-by forever, my own dearest brother. By the time you get this I shall be gone forever. I know, dear love, there is no forgiveness for what I am going to do. . . . I am tired of living, so am willing to die. Life may be sweet to some, but death to me is sweeter." [1]

From a patient in a French asylum:

> "I suffer too much in this hospital, both physically and morally. Besides the burnings and the sleeplessness (for I no longer sleep since I am shut up here, and the little

[1] *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 147.

rest I get is broken by bad dreams and I am waked with a jump by nightmares, dreadful visions, lightning, thunder, and the rest) fear, atrocious fear, presses me down, holds me without respite, never lets me go. Where is the justice in it all! What have I done to deserve this excess of severity? Under what form will this fear crush me? What would I not owe to anyone who would rid me of my life! Eat, drink, lie awake all night, suffer without interruption—such is the fine legacy I have received from my mother! What I fail to understand is this abuse of power. There are limits to everything, there is a middle way. But God knows neither middle way nor limits. I say God, but why? All I have known so far has been the devil. After all, I am afraid of God as much as of the devil, so I drift along, thinking of nothing but suicide, but with neither courage nor means here to execute the act. As you read this it will easily prove to you my insanity. The style and the ideas are incoherent enough—I can see that myself. But I cannot keep myself from being either crazy or an idiot;

and, as things are, from whom should I ask pity? I am defenseless against the invisible enemy who is tightening his coils around me. I should be no better armed against him even if I saw him, or had seen him. Oh, if he would but kill me, devil take him! Death, death, once for all! But I stop. I have raved to you long enough. I say raved, for I can write no otherwise, having neither brain nor thoughts left. O God! what a misfortune to be born! Born like a mushroom, doubtless between an evening and a morning; and how true and right I was when in our philosophy year in college I chewed the cud of bitterness with the pessimists. Yes, indeed, there is more pain in life than gladness—it is one long agony until the grave. Think how gay it makes me to remember that this misery of mine, coupled with this unspeakable fear, may last fifty, one hundred, who knows how many more years!" [1]

I quote two additional passages, each from the pen of a religious leader. The first is the case of Bunyan, and the second that of Rev.

[1] *The Varieties of Religious Experience,* p. 148.

Henry Alline, who, James tells us, was a devoted evangelist who worked in Nova Scotia during the last century. The similarity of these cases to the two just cited is very striking.

> "I found myself as on a miry bog that shook if I did but stir; and was as there left both by God and Christ, and the spirit, and all good things. But my original and inward pollution, that was my plague and affliction. By reason of that, I was more loathsome in my own eyes than was a toad; and I thought I was so in God's eyes too. Sin and corruption, I said, would as naturally bubble out of my heart as water would bubble out of a fountain. I could have changed heart with anybody. I thought none but the Devil himself could equal me for inward wickedness and pollution of mind. Sure, thought I, I am forsaken of God; and thus I continued a long while, even for some years together. . . . My heart was at times exceedingly hard. If I would have given a thousand pounds for a tear, I could not shed one; no, nor sometimes scarce desire to shed

> one. I was both a burthen and a terror to myself; nor did I ever so know, as now, what it was to be weary of my life, and yet afraid to die. How gladly would I have been anything but myself! Anything but a man! and in any condition but my own." [1]

During the time that Bunyan was suffering this, he was not, as one might suppose, wrestling to break the hold of some evil habit. Neither does his conscience seem to have been the prey of remorse because of immoral behavior. Like St. Paul, who before his conversion was moral even among the strictest sect of the Pharisees—Puritans, so Bunyan says,

> "Yet all this while as to the act of sinning I never was more tender than now. I durst not take a pin or a stick though but so big as a straw, for my conscience now was sore and would smart at every touch; I could not tell how to speak my words for fear I should misplace them. Oh, how gingerly did I then go in all I did or said!" [1]

The fact that this tenderness and moral scrupulousness did not either to Bunyan or St.

[1] *The Varieties of Religious Experience,* p. 158.

Paul bring relief from the sense of sin again confirms our thesis that the sense of sin is independent of the moral judgment. It was this fact which differentiated Bunyan and St. Paul from the Puritans and Pharisees—mere conventional moralists—among whom they lived. It was this which gave the quality of religion to their experience in contrast with the dull ethical formalism which in their day—and in ours—was the popular substitute for religion. When such persons finally attain release from sin, they have reached something more than mere automatic conformity to the forms of vulgar social control. And in this sense religion is an escape from popular morality. The "redeemed" spirit is above "the Law."

It may be that such a deliverance from the dull routine of herd morality by persons who still consciously have to defer to the moral sanctions of the community is in part what the psyche is seeking during its struggle with the feeling of sin. Redemption would then appear as a mechanism of escape, a device by which the anti-ethical impulses which exist in the unconscious, and give rise to the sense of "sinfulness," are sublimated, disguised, and attached to socially acceptable ends. All this

would be but the social projection of the same conflict which exists between the subject and the "perfect" father image. That this conflict manifests symptoms similar to those of the psychopathic depressive state is again shown in the "confession" of Henry Alline. Here also there is the sense of personal wickedness, guilt, and inferiority, together with a loss of interest in the world of objects:

> "Everything I saw seemed to be a burden to me; the earth seemed accursed for my sake; all trees, plants, rocks, hills and vales seemed to be dressed in mourning and groaning, under the weight of the curse, and everything around me seemed to be conspiring my ruin. My sins seemed to be laid open; so that I thought that everyone I saw knew them, and sometimes I was almost ready to acknowledge many things, which I thought they knew; yea, sometimes it seemed to me as if everyone was pointing me out as the most guilty wretch upon earth. I had now so great a sense of the vanity and emptiness of all things here below, that I knew the whole world could not possibly make me happy,

> no, nor the whole system of creation. When I waked in the morning, the first thought would be, Oh, my wretched soul, what shall I do, where shall I go? And when I laid down, would say, I shall be perhaps in hell before morning." [1]

I have made use of these examples cited by James because they are ready to hand and are familiar to those who have read the *Varieties of Religious Experience.* There are thousands of similar cases reported in the literature both of religion and of psychopathology. The cases of the latter type have been submitted to analysis, and in many instances the case-history shows that the symptoms have their cause in the infantile fixation on the parent image as I have pointed out. It is not my contention that this is the etiology of the feeling of sin in all cases. But it is significant that when this feeling is most pronounced, the accounts which we have of it ordinarily reveal the following elements; as unusual preoccupation with the inner interest of the ego, as if the subject felt that the attainment of satisfactory self-valuation were positively necessary to his life; a deep sense of personal inferiority; a loss of

[1] *The Varieties of Religious Experience,* p. 159.

interest in the world of objects, sometimes amounting to a feeling of the utter worthlessness and meaninglessness of existence; a general feeling of anxiety often amounting to acute fear and dread; a feeling of alienation from God the Father—hence of alienation from all affection; compulsive thoughts of death and suicide; a struggle for the discovery and vitalizing of a vague, partially conscious "something," to possess which would again fill the heart with peace and happiness. These are also the common symptoms of those nervous disorders in which the childish ego and the parent image play determining parts.

The "free-floating" anxiety which appears in the feeling of sin—that is, the restlessness and worry for which no definite object may be found, occurs in ordinary anxiety dreams, and in the milder forms of the neurosis. This phenomenon is said to be the result of conflict, and the cause assigned to it by Freud is "suspended libido"—the sense of frustration which results from the inability of the emotional interest—Freud says, the erotic impulse—to find and attach itself to its object. In the anxiety neurosis this emotional interest is manifest in a restless seeking for the object. When the in-

terest is stimulated yet inhibited from within the psyche because of its fixation upon infantile objects there is a feeling of conflict. When, as in the severe nervous disorders the emotional interest turns in upon the infantile image of the subject himself, the world of objects is left without value or even reality, or another more congenial world of dream-stuff is substituted. In these more serious forms there is an impairment of the ability to adjust the organism to the ordinary situations of its environment. Somewhere along the line between neurasthenia and the psychosis lies the religious feeling of sin.

The insane very often have delusions in which religious imagery occurs. But such cases should be distinguished from religious experience as such. Moreover, it must be said that the examples which I have borrowed from James, are rather extreme. The ordinary religious "convert" who has passed through a period of struggle with sin probably experiences those mechanisms in a mild and incipient form. Many very religious persons have had little if any conscious personal knowledge of this struggle; they have simply made their decision, and have "grown in grace." They abhor sin, pray

to be delivered from it, yet it is always for them a mere tragic possibility hovering like a storm cloud on the far horizon of their life. The "old nature" was given up without much storm and stress, largely, I think, because for such spirits the emotional fixation on early images was not so intense. Yet even in such cases there is enough in common with those who have wrestled through the dark valley so that both types may make use of the same symbols of sin and redemption.

If the religious person remained permanently in his struggle with sin, I suppose we should have to say that his case was psychopathic. But one does not "get religion" merely by being "convicted of sin." The process is complete only with the *feeling of redemption;* with the reconciliation with the Father there comes a sense of restored personal worth. Having accepted the Father, the believer now feels himself, however unworthy he may be, accepted by the Father. A new form of self-appreciation is gained, and this, it would appear, is the quest and goal of the religious wish. The soul is saved, the "personality picture" about which we spoke in the first chapter is secured, though in a modified form. "If any man be in Christ

he is a new creature." That in our natures which is unacceptable to consciousness is "sublimated"—its forms of expression are directed toward goals which, though not the natural ones, are admissible to the self feeling of the subject. Or the psyche wins a victory over itself by admitting to consciousness its imperfections. It then withdraws the libido from these elements of its nature, and, fixing the attention upon the idea of the Father's mercy, is enabled to accept itself through the very act of denying itself. In other words, *the subject has learned to forgive his own sins,* by conceiving of them as having been forgiven by the Father.

Such self-forgiveness must occur in and be accepted by the unconscious. It means that a new defense has been fabricated and the regressive tendency checked. Thus one's "sinful nature" no longer stands as a barrier between himself and the Father image. He feels that the perfect Father now loves him, in spite of his sin. He can now accept the infantile Father image without himself reverting to a narcissistic emotionalism. Such a throw back of the libido upon the ego would indeed be a serious matter. It would result

in "regression," and in pathological inability to perform the ordinary duties and functions of living. Thus the "sin complex" shows that the tendency toward regression meets with strong resistance. Otherwise, the conflict would end in the psychosis, whereas in religion it ends in "redemption."

The convert to religion does more than assent to a creed or set of ready-made opinions. Conversion is much more than an affair of the intellect; it is a radical emotional readjustment —a self-cure which takes place at last analysis within the unconscious. The tendency to regression and to narcissism is there just as in the neurosis, but the believer finds a new outlet for his emotional interest. This appears in consciousness as the feeling that the Father image is forgiving toward those very facts of human nature which the infantile egoism was unable to tolerate in the father, and later revolted against when discovered in the subject himself. Thus a working solution is found in "forgiveness" between the infantile ego and the demands of the mature organism. The childish wish "forgives" what psychologists call the "object libido"—and thus ceases to be a thing apart from it. In other words, it

becomes adequately repressed. It may now use and be used by the "object libido." The infantile "ego libido" still may provide the imagery through which mature emotional interest functions; but both now move in the direction of the object. *Religion differs from the psychoses in the type of solution which it finds for the unconscious conflict.*

Thus far I have discussed redemption from sin as reconciliation to the Father image. While this would appear to be the most important phase of the subject it is not all. There are other aspects of the struggle of the soul for "purity" which are expressed in the symbolism of religion. In whatever symbols the desire for escape from sin may be expressed, it should be regarded as a form of protest against the feeling of inferiority. This feeling may arise from many causes, real or imaginary. Anything about us which is unacceptable to our picture of ourselves may cause it. Most normal people are vaguely haunted by it to some extent. It is only when this feeling amounts to a deep unconscious sense of failure or unworthiness or deficiency—a suspicion that one is not "the real thing"—that it becomes serious. In such cases the psyche seeks to save the personality

picture by surrounding it with various fictions. The mechanisms of defense, escape, and compensation which we discussed in an earlier chapter have this function.

Quite independently of religion, the many forms of protest against the feeling of inferiority have great importance for social psychology. Much of the overstimulated ambition for financial success is due to such a protest. A man says in his heart, "I'll just show them that I amount to something," and with the possession of wealth, though in many cases the social prestige so attained is not accompanied by the culture which ought to go with it, there is a sense of self-satisfaction in the mere thought of possession. I once heard a farmer's wife express this feeling in a manner perhaps more naïve and crude than is usual, but there is little doubt that the feeling is pretty general. A banker and his wife who lived in the small town some miles distant passed along the road riding in some sort of high-seated vehicle with red wheels. This good woman saw them and said: "There go the Joneses. How they put on airs these days! Well, let them be stuck up if they want to. Bob and I have just as big a pile of dust as any of them."

One has only to listen to the average "self-made" business man's talk to hear sentiments of like nature. I am inclined to think that much of the "commercialism" of this democratic age is of the psychological origin I have suggested. Commoners at the close of the eighteenth century felt themselves grievously slighted by the assumed superiority of the older aristocracy. Industrial processes were giving to a new class a sense of economic power and of self-importance. The existence of the traditional aristocracy was a challenge to this growing self-appreciation. Hence "down with aristocrats," "open the doors to merit and ability," "give every man his chance," "we are just as good as they are." Popular valuation of the goods of life led to an identification of possession of wealth with the idea of superiority, and so it remains—a truly democratic view.

Protest against the feeling of inferiority also motivates much of the social unrest which today challenges the very capitalist civilization that the democratic valuation of life has brought us. In a social order where superiority is identified with possession of wealth, where the bars are down and all may hope for membership in the class of the dominant and

successful, where, in a word, the daily strivings of most people are directed to that end, the undeniable differences in wealth give the unsuccessful again the feeling of inferiority. The protest against this feeling takes the form of a demand for a new deal. Attention is centered upon the abuses of the present system, and upon the sufferings of the poor, and these facts are used as propaganda for "social justice." In the contemplation of a new civilization in which one no longer feels himself to be an inferior and a failure because he finds himself in middle life still a laborer, in which, instead, the worker becomes a dictator, the unsuccessful find an ideal defense mechanism against the feeling which we are discussing.

This protest also appears in the uniformity with which all crowds promise their members dominance over society in the future and imagine that such dominance will be the millennium. Membership in any minority group may cause one to feel inferior and may lead him to invent some form of protest. A youth recently said, "Yes, sir, I am a single-taxer—and I'm proud of it." Ignorance commonly resorts to such protest in the popular ridicule which is heaped upon "highbrows." The very democratic doctrine

of "liberty, equality, and fraternity" is often an expression of such an attempt to escape the recognition that some among us may be congenitally superior to others. I think there may be also an element of this in the popular resentment of the attempts of psychologists to test and grade native intelligence.

I mention these few examples of the social manifestation of the feeling of inferiority—and there are many others of great significance—only to show how deep and far-reaching this feeling is. We should not be surprised, therefore, to find it assuming religious form. Whatever may be the origin or the conscious expression taken by the feeling of inferiority, the protest against it often assumes the form or imagery of deliverance from sin. One "repents," "turns over a new leaf," makes a "new start," experiences regeneration, is born again, becomes "washed in the blood of the Lamb," "puts on the righteousness of Christ." Or he joins the religious fellowship and is accepted as a member of "the better element of the community." Every religious revival finds a measure of response among persons to whom there is good news in the assurance that there is more joy in heaven over one sinner

that repenteth than over ninety and nine just persons who need no repentance. Self-appreciation is greatly assisted by the belief that one is included among the "elect unto salvation," that the Son of God died for him, that as salvation is the purpose of all creation, so the meaning and end of the cosmos is the salvation of his soul.

Many converts attain through such imagery a victory over their past life which is more than a mere anæsthetic for the gnawing sense of inferiority. Often there is a marked change in behavior. The drunkard may become a total abstainer and devote his life to the cause of reform. The thief may become henceforth an honest man. One who was ill-tempered and cruel may be transformed into a person who is unusually kind, cheerful, and forgiving. St. Paul saw in such a sudden transformation of character a miracle of divine grace. His own experience of conversion led him to the truth that what one may fail in accomplishing through conscious effort in the direction of scrupulous conformity to the moral law may often be attained by the release of forces from within the unconscious. Every creative artist and thinker knows the same truth; one attains

mastery only when he lifts himself above his technique. For the richest functioning of the whole personality there must be a sense of release from external authority; principles must be made to serve the individual in his creative effort; he no longer exists merely to serve principles. This is true also of the moral life. Nietzsche understood this fact quite as well as St. Paul when he said that popular moralism was the slavery of the herd, and that the highest men were beyond vulgar dilemmas—"beyond good and evil."

While this is true of the few master spirits, it would seem that the experience of conversion itself is not so radical a change in human nature as it is popularly supposed to be. James showed that the value of sainthood itself, if we apply to it the criteria of effective behavior, is practically *nil.* Even for the great souls, the experience of conversion adds little, if anything, to the native endowment. Tolstoy does not become a greater novelist because of such an experience, nor, as Havelock Ellis shows, were Isaac Newton or Faraday made greater scientists. St. Augustine may have been saved for a career of usefulness, by his Christian faith, from a wasted and dissolute life, though

even that is open to question; certainly his native ability as a thinker is not improved by that transformation of his genius whereby the theologian in him supplants the philosopher.

For the great mass of believers the experience of conversion seldom lifts one above the dilemmas of popular moral convention. And as popular vices and virtues are but the reverse sides of the same psychological conflicts, the change from the one to the other has indeed its social advantages both for the convert and for those about him. But he is still caught in the old dilemma—even though he may now cling to the virtuous side. And *a man is known by the dilemmas he keeps.* Spiritual progress means the lifting of the issues of conduct to higher and higher planes, the restating of goods and evils in terms of ever-widening interests and deeper insight. The reformed criminal who says to himself, "I am now a good citizen; I no longer pick pockets," is doubtless a better man than he was, but he has a long way to go before he becomes the moral equal of those to whom the temptation to pick pockets is not a live issue. While conversion renders conformity to moral convention easier for many, it does not often so transform their

natural qualities that there is a corresponding sudden improvement in taste or æsthetic appreciation or wisdom. There is no escaping the fact that capacity for these latter interests is born in one, and may be developed only by discipline.

And here we strike upon a form of protest against the feeling of inferiority which has both religious and sociological significance. Mediocrity ever strives to make its own spiritual dilemmas the criteria of the behavior and thought of all. It judges all from the level of its own spiritual outlook. By making conformity to its own standards the rule for all, and defining the good man in terms only of its own goods—*i.e.*, what is good for itself—the spirit which is conscious of its own limitations may yet feel that it is just as good as the great. Indeed, the great ones of earth may be humbled, those proud in the imagination of their hearts scattered, and those of low degree exalted. A Goethe may be condemned because with all his genius he has not conformed to the standards of popular moral convention. A Darwin or Huxley may be consigned to hell fire because his thinking controverts the dogmas of popular belief. Thus it were better

that a millstone were hanged about the neck of the great one and he were drowned in the depths of the sea than that he should scandalize one of these little ones.

In justice to religion it should be said that, strictly speaking, this note of popular resentment and noisy unction is not part of the religious experience as such. It is rather a social phenomenon. The protest against their own inferiority, on the part of those condemned by heredity to live on the dead level of the commonplace, merely seizes upon the religious imagery of sin and redemption as a weapon in the struggle to retain the sense of self-importance. The most deeply religious people, it would seem, are free from this sort of thing and find that communion with the Highest through reconciliation with the Father image satisfies their spiritual needs. But the religious interest does not exist in a vacuum, and all sorts of people become "religious." We reach understanding of our subject only through an analysis not only of those for whom this experience is "pure" and unworldly, but also of those for whom the religious interest is mixed with the coarser facts of the unconscious. Class distinction in psychological matters is a

fact which becomes ever more significant for the student of society. And these basic psychic differences ever come to the surface in religious experience as elsewhere, the miracle of regeneration and the dogma of democracy notwithstanding.

One further symbol of redemption remains for us to consider, and that is the "Redeemer." This figure appears as the Savior of the people, the Hero, the God-man, the Messiah, the Enlightened One, the slain Priest-King, the Lamb of God, the Son. So exalted and purified is the image of the Redeemer in Christianity that the symbol may almost be said to be a distinctly Christian idea. There are, however, many analogies in folklore. Drews thought that he could trace back to primitive myths practically every element in the story of the birth, ministry, and sacrificial death and resurrection of the Christ. A discussion of this point would lead us to make a long detour in the region of comparative mythology. It would be impossible within the limits of our study to present in an adequate and convincing manner the results of the exhaustive studies that have been made in this field. I can only refer the reader to such books as Drews's *The Christ Myth* and

to Frazer's well-known work, *The Golden Bough,* especially to the chapters entitled, "Incarnate Human Gods," "Eating the God," "Human Scapegoats in Classical Antiquity," "The Myth of Balder," "Killing the Divine King," "Sacrifice of the King's Son," "The Myth of Osiris." An excellent study of the psychology of the hero myth has been made by Dr. Otto Rank, in *The Myth of the Birth of the Hero.*

Anyone who is familiar with such mythological study will, I believe, agree with me that while the Jesus story is so far removed in its moral and spiritual content from the myths to which I have referred that it becomes difficult for us to think of them in relation to it, yet it has certain elements in common with these folk legends, and it is not unlikely that similar psychic motives determined the fabrication of the image of the Redeemer in all cases.

In all or most of these stories of the Redeemer or Hero we find the following elements: the birth of the Hero is foretold, His existence is destined to be the means of achieving some portentous event, He is to supplant the father, to restore the Kingdom, etc. Often he is born of a virgin, or has a god for

a parent. The old king, the father, uncle, grandfather (Herod) seeks to destroy the child. He is brought up by foster parents (Joseph). He wanders in strange regions (Egypt). He performs mighty deeds (Heracles, Samson, Œdipus, Christ's miracles). He is drawn by inexorable fate to his tragic end. The father is overthrown, the son's kingdom is established (Perseus, Cyrus, Œdipus), or the Hero is himself destroyed (Heracles, Œdipus, Samson, the crucifixion).

This tragic end is often represented as a return to the wife or the mother. In fact, the supplanting of the father, taking his place,—identifying himself with him,—and the return to the mother are, psychologically considered, the two sides of the same infantile wish fancy. Rank finds the entire hero myth to be a dramatization of this wish. Jung has shown that the infantile return so symbolized often expresses a wish for death and rebirth. This idea of death and rebirth has many symbols in Christianity. It is dramatized in the ceremony of baptism in which going down into the water is an expression at once of death and return to the mother, and coming up out of the water symbolizes birth. "We who died into sin, how

shall we longer live therein? Or are ye ignorant that all we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were bound, therefore, with him through baptism into death that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life."

Jung has shown in the *Psychology of the Unconscious* that the cross is a mother symbol. He says:

> The hanging of the sacrifice to the cross also occurred in America prior to its discovery. Müller mentions the Fejervaryian manuscript (a Mexican hieroglyphic kodex), at the conclusion of which there is a colossal cross, in the middle of which there hangs a bleeding divinity. Equally interesting is the cross of Palenque; up above is a bird, on either side two human figures, who look at the cross and hold a child against it either for sacrifice or for baptism. The old Mexicans are said to have invoked the favor of Centeotls, "the daughter of heaven and the goddess of wheat," every spring by nailing upon the cross a youth or a maiden and by shooting

the sacrifice with arrows. The name of the Mexican cross signifies "tree of our life or flesh. . . ." An effigy from the island of Philæ represents Osiris in the form of a crucified god, wept over by Isis and Nephthys, the sister consort. . . .

I must leave it an open question as to whether the symbol of the cross has any relation to the two pieces of wood in the religious fire production, as is frequently claimed. It does appear, however, as if the cross symbol actually still possessed the significance of "union," for this idea belongs to the fertility charm, and especially to the thought of eternal rebirth, which is most intimately bound up with the cross. The thought of "union," expressed by the symbol of the cross, is met with in "Timaios" of Plato, where the world soul is conceived as stretched out between heaven and earth in the form of an X (Chi); hence in the form of a "St. Andrew's cross." When we now learn, furthermore, that the world soul contains in itself the world as a body, then this picture inevitably reminds us of the mother. . . .

The Tum of On-Heliopolis bears the name "the father of his mother"; what that means needs no explanation; Jusas or Nebit-Hotpet, the goddess joined to him, was called sometimes the mother, sometimes the daughter, sometimes the wife of the god. The day of the beginning of autumn is designated in the Heliopolitan inscriptions as the "festival of the goddess Jusasit," as "the arrival of the sister for the purpose of uniting with her father." . . . The great god becomes a child again; he enters the mother's womb in order to renew himself. In a hymn it is said:

"Thy mother, the heavens, stretches forth her arms to thee." In another place it is said:

"Thou shinest, oh, father of the gods, upon the back of thy mother, daily thy mother takes thee in her arms. When thou illuminatest the dwelling of night, thou unitest with thy mother, the heavens."

The Tum of Pitum-Heliopolis not only bears the Crux Ansata as a symbol, but also has this sign as his most frequent

surname, that is, anx or anxi, which means "life" or "the living." . . . The cross seems, therefore, to be an extraordinarily condensed symbol; its supreme meaning is that of the tree of life, and, therefore, is a symbol of the mother. The symbolization in a human form is, therefore, intelligible. The phallic forms of the Crux Ansata belong to the abstract meaning of "life" and "fertility," as well as to the meaning of union, which we can now very properly interpret as *cohabitation with the mother for the purpose of renewal.* It is, therefore, not only a very touching but also a very significant naïve symbolism when Mary, in an Old English lament of the Virgin, accuses the cross of being a false tree, which unjustly and without reason destroyed "the pure fruit of her body, her gentle birdling," with a poisonous draught, the draught of death, which is destined only for the guilty descendants of the sinner Adam. Her son was not a sharer in that guilt. (Compare with this the cunning of Isis with the fatal draught of love.) Mary laments:

"Cross, thou art the evil stepmother of

my son, so high hast thou hung him that I cannot even kiss his feet! Cross, thou art my mortal enemy, thou hast slain my little bluebird!"

The holy cross answers:

"Woman, I thank thee for my honor: thy splendid fruit, which now I bear, shines as a red blossom. Not alone to save thee, but to save the whole world this precious flower blooms in thee."

Santa Crux says of the relation to each other of the two mothers (Isis in the morning and Isis in the evening):

"Thou hast been crowned as Queen of Heaven on account of the child which thou hast borne. But I shall appear as the shining relic to the whole world, at the day of judgment. I shall then raise my lament for thy divine son innocently slain upon me." . . .

The author adds:

The neurotic who cannot leave the mother has good reasons; the fear of death holds him there. It seems as if no idea and no word were strong enough to express the meaning of this. Entire re-

ligions were constructed in order to give words to the immensity of this conflict. This struggle for expression which continued down through the centuries certainly cannot have its source in the restricted realm of the vulgar conception of incest. Rather one must understand the law which is ultimately expressed as "incest prohibition" as coercion to domestication, and consider the religious systems as institutions which first receive, then organize and gradually sublimate, the motor forces of the animal nature not immediately available for cultural purposes. . . .

Such parallels show how little human personality and how much divine—that is to say, universally human—is found in the Christ mystery. No man is or, indeed, ever was, a hero, for the hero is a god, and therefore impersonal and generally applicable to all. Christ is a "spirit," as is shown in the very early Christian interpretation. In different places of the earth, and in the most varied forms and in the coloring of the various periods, the Savior-hero appears as a fruit of the

> entrance of the libido in the personal maternal depths. . . . The Christian Church as a place of religious ceremony is really nothing but the grave of a hero (catacombs). The believer descends into the grave, in order to rise from the dead with the hero. That the meaning underlying the Church is that of the mother's womb can scarcely be doubted. The symbols of Mass are so distinct that the mythology of the sacred act peeps out everywhere. It is the magic charm of rebirth.[1]

Jung here perhaps overemphasizes the importance of the mother image, yet the repression of the image, which elsewhere appears disguised as the Virgin, the "Theotochos," is significant, and would indicate that in the unconscious it plays a more important rôle in the act of redemption than would appear on the surface.

At any rate, the infantile return here suggested by Jung is closer to the inner reality than those rationalizations of the symbol of redemption which appear in theology. The birth, life, and death of the redeemer have the

[1] Jung, *Psychology of the Unconscious,* pp. 296 ff.

psychological function of expressing the wish for newness of life. The redeemer vicariously accomplishes this rebirth through his death and resurrection. And this death and resurrection are symbolic of the psychic change which transpires in the heart of the believer when the unconscious, pressing backward toward an infantile emotionalism in which the Father image is in conflict with the very interests which elaborated it, solves its conflict by the surrender—the death of the infantile egoism itself. With the act of self-surrender there comes a sense of harmony, newness of life, rebirth. The unconscious wish survives, but in a "sublimated" form. It no longer drags the subject along the path of regression. It has been through that, often up to the verge of negation of the worth of life itself. In the surrender of this infantile wish the individual by the very act modifies, masters, the Father image. Henceforth the symbol leads him forward, not backward, on to the realization of perfection in and through the experiences and relationships of life.

The Hero-Saviour in his miraculous birth is the symbol of the subject's early appreciation of his own origin and nature; in his being

brought up by the foster father there is the symbol of the childish revolt against the conjugal relation of the parents, his feeling of exclusion. The wonder works of the hero are symbols of youth's own fancied transcendence of ordinary human limitations, of its "narcissism," if you will. The death is symbolic of the return to the infantile and the surrender of the childish imagery; the resurrection is the new self, the mature self which may now turn to its life in the world and strive through the aid of its revalued symbols to achieve the realization of the dream which it first sought in an attempted return to the ego.

Thus "saving faith" in Christ is not mere belief that such a person existed, nor is it the ability to give a rational theological explanation of the ministry and death of Christ. Saving faith is an "appropriation" of the work of Christ, an acceptance of Him as substitute for the self—that is an unconscious self-identification with the symbol. "Christ liveth in me." "I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus Christ." "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." "For me to live is Christ."

This "saving faith" is often spoken of as acceptance of the death of Christ as a sacri-

ficial atonement for the believer's own sin. "Jesus paid it all." Theology makes much of this view of the sacrificial death of Christ. Many theologians have held that as sin is an infinite offense, only an infinite being could pay the penalty. According to such a view, Christ died in order to "propitiate divine justice."

But this whole explanation of the sacrifice is unpsychological. It is a rationalization, a thing of the intellect—though even on intellectual ground it is difficult to see how the reason may be satisfied with the theory that justice is maintained when the innocent suffers for the guilty. This piece of rationalization, like many others, breaks down upon close analysis. But the inadequacy of the theological explanation need not cause us to ignore the psychological meaning of the sacrifice itself. The sacrifice is a symbolic act. It is a device by which *certain wishes are satisfied* vicariously, in effigy, as it were. It is a method of objectifying something which really transpires in the unconscious. In the sacrificial death of Christ the believer has such an objective symbol of his own experience of redemption from sin. Christ as the symbol of the infantile personality-picture or "ego libido"—the Son dies

on the cross in the hour of that infantile return which exists also in the believer's own unconscious, and the Son and the Father are, moreover, really one. Here as part of the return to the mother image is expressed identification with the father image. In this the infantile father image perishes along with the Son. I have in an earlier chapter pointed out the fact that the animal slain in the sacrifice for sin by primitive men was a disguised father image. The dreadful and solemn rite is therefore an expression of the wish to destroy this image, to *break the emotional fixation upon the parent.*

But the individual still has need of this imagery; it must be revived, with a different valuation. It must become capable of unconscious identification with the objects of his mature "object libido" or emotional interest. It must cease to be a fixation which draws off his love into itself, and be an instrument of transference. So the surrendered childish ego must live again, this time as the "equal of the father"—"enthroned on his right hand"—that is to say, the ego finds the father only to appropriate the symbol. Unconsciously the father fixation is loosened, and the imagery in which the self-feeling was caught and held and drawn

away from life may now be utilized as an instrument for the direction of the emotional interest to the object. The sacrifice of Christ is therefore, a symbol of the liberation of the unconscious. With the acceptance of Christ, self-identification with the image, there is expressed the removal of the guilt of sin, through that solution of the inner conflict in which the childish ego now comes to be drawn along with the current of life. The childhood symbol of the father is appropriated; there is reconciliation.

We have dealt at length with the symbols in which the experience of redemption or "conversion" is commonly expressed. The experience is not necessarily confined to the use of such symbols. Mystics exist in every religion, and often are unable to express their experience in the symbolism of any recognized system of belief. Moreover, those who attain to such a mystic approach to life would seem to bear witness to the same "spiritual" reality, or psychological facts, whatever the language they use. Conventionally, if we may apply such a word to the mystic, his philosophy would seem to be a sort of Platonic idealism. But this, too, is only a matter of the intellect; it has nothing

to do with his religious experience itself. Such an experience may or not be accompanied or rationalized by a metaphysical system. It has nothing to do with morality. It is a sense of inner harmony within the psyche itself. Often this sense of harmony comes to minds that are not consciously "religious" at all. The psyche simply rises above, masters and transforms, its infantile wishes. All self-knowledge should result in such an accomplishment. This is the true aim of philosophy. It is a result sometimes achieved by psychoanalysis. Where it is not so achieved, harmony with self and the world must be found through the religious imagery of sin and redemption. Thus religion is a normal social phenomenon, providing the cure for man's unconscious conflict which the neurotic vainly seeks along the lonely path of regression. In the phenomenon of redemption, a way of transference is found which leads the soul out of self into fullness of life. This transference is made easy through the religious community, membership in which is part of normal religious experience.

## VI

### *The Religious Community*

RELIGION is more of a social phenomenon than I have made it appear thus far in our discussion. In our search for the psychic causes, the unconscious motives which lie behind the experience of salvation from sin, we have tried to give an account of the fixation upon the parent image. We have been chiefly concerned with that which takes place in the inner life of the individual. Since all experience is essentially personal, our method in so limiting the subject of religious experience is justified. For until we learn what it is that is here expressing itself, we are unprepared for a study of the social aspects of religion.

There are individuals here and there whose spiritual life remains always a secret discovery of their own. They seem to have no need to share it. A sense of fellowship with the Unseen, an inner harmony, satisfies the need

which drives most religious people into the fold. Such unique spirits are the exception. For the great mass of believers religion is largely a community affair. The average church member may truthfully say that he has passed through no such experience as I described in the foregoing chapters. In fact, many religious people are only religious through convention. Beyond a vague feeling of tender sentiment and sense that one is doing his duty by attendance upon religious services, one may be very devout and yet never have had any religious experience at all. The "spiritual life" may be a closed secret to him. He simply does not know what it is about or he feels that he possesses it when he acquires the habit of going through the external forms.

One supports a church because that appears to be the thing to do; he may do so for much the same reason that he belongs to a card club. He may not care very much about either, but he "belongs" because he finds others in his set doing so. He gives nominal assent—and often little thought—to certain beliefs because he was brought up that way; kneels in prayer because some one is praying; sings because there is a song; and probably enjoys in a way

the social activities of his religious organization because there really is human fellowship in them. In this way undoubtedly religious beliefs and practices are spread throughout the community and are accepted second-hand by vast numbers of persons who at heart do not take these things very seriously. The presence in religious groups of large numbers of those to whom religion is a mere convention is, I think, beneficial. Intensely religious persons are often nervously unstable by temperament, and, unless held in check by the more indifferent ones, are likely to plunge the religious fellowship into extreme forms of group behavior.

Religious fellowship thus accounts for the communication of religious beliefs and customs, but it does not account for their psychological origin. That must be sought in the experience of the few who have created the values of faith and have fabricated its symbols out of their inner life. Yet for these few also, the religious fellowship plays an important rôle. It serves to complete the transference about which we spoke in the previous chapter.

Among primitive people—and with some that are not primitive but have a strong ethnic sense—the religious community is the com-

munity itself. The entire group holds the same beliefs and performs certain ceremonies in the ordinary course of social behavior. Religion for such groups has not yet become a special interest. Sin and redemption are thought of as social. And while the psychological mechanisms and the symbols are much the same as in later times, group consciousness is stronger; the whole group may feel itself under a curse because of the sin of one member. The Hebrews while they are overrunning the land of Canaan believe that their defeat in battle is a divine punishment upon them all because Achan has taken to himself some of the spoils which had been declared taboo. Again the great Day of Atonement is established so that the sin of the whole people may be removed.

Very early, however, we see signs that membership even in this religious community is something special. The youth must be initiated into full membership with certain rites. Later certain initiation ceremonies seem to be left to the choice of the individual. It is said that most of the Greek nobility had at one time been initiated into the Eleusinian mysteries, but not all, and there appears to have been nothing compulsory about such initiation.

From early times various sects and cults have appeared in which groups of believers could have a fellowship which was different in character from that which pertained in the larger social group. These special groups were set apart from the world. They were the "holy ones," the "beloved," the saints, the "pure," the "knowing ones." Each group soon developed its peculiar "mysteries," dogma, and practices. Bands of prophets appeared among the Hebrews as early as the eighth century before Christianity. In the Orient secret orders of mystics are of very ancient origin. During the centuries just before and after the origin of Christianity, the religious interest seems to have been very productive of such sects. Out of the confusion of cults of every description rose Catholic Christianity with the ideal of a world-wide religious fellowship. Yet even within the Church many societies or special religious groups prevailed. Since the Reformation, the tendency toward the organization of all sorts of special cults and religious fellowships has again increased.

Here we have an almost universal characteristic of religious experience. There must be something more than the normally social,

something in religion itself which impels those who have this experience to seek a special form of social life through membership in a religious community which is set apart from the whole.

To be sure, men naturally seek the fellowship of those who are like themselves. Any similar interest or common experience may become the basis of some social organization. We have many examples of this in such social phenomena as labor unions, *turnvereins,* the American Legion, the Ku-Klux Klan, authors' leagues, various scientific associations, and even the "Lucy Stone" League. It seems that society is nothing but the name that we give to the sum total of these various forms of association; that, in fact, no one belongs to society as just society, but always finds his relation to the community as a whole through membership in such special groups. It is doubtful if we could long keep any human interest alive without a meeting of some sort, and a constitution and by-laws, a chairman and a membership and a resolutions committee. No sooner does one have an idea about anything than he proceeds to call his neighbors together and found a new organization. Patrick has well shown that the professed purposes

of such organizations are only special pleading. The organizations are really ends in themselves. Man is the animal that must "belong to something."

Since religion is a dominant and permanently vital interest for most people, and man is a social animal, we might say that the religious community is simply one among a countless number of similar manifestations of "the herd instinct." But in that case we should lose sight of certain features which differentiate the religious fellowship from other forms of association. Many of the features which characterize the religious group may be discovered in the ordinary forms of group behavior, but their ensemble is different. Nowhere—with the possible exception of the modern state to which men now tend to assume a religious attitude—does the *group itself* become the object of such adoration, trust, reverence, as in the case of the religious community. The Church is sacred, it is of divine origin; it is "the New Creation," existing both in heaven and on earth. It whispers to men of things which are not of this world and its walls are mysterious with a divine presence. Its services are sacraments, its anathema is a

dreadful curse, its ancient Scriptures are the word of the Almighty.

In no other fellowship do men find such security and refuge from the world. Toward no other is there such a *filial attitude* on the part of the members. They speak of the church as "mother."

This use of the mother symbol is of great psychological importance, in view of what we have said about the religious significance of emotional fixation upon the parent image. Is it possible that the mother image so carefully repressed in all that appears in the symbolism of the experience of redemption emerges now as the Church Herself? In that case the mother image has been unconsciously present all along, but for reasons I have pointed out has been pushed still farther into the background during the search for reconciliation with the father. When this reconciliation is achieved in the feeling of redemption, that which was all the while an underlying motive—return to the mother—may now emerge in disguised and sublimated form. Membership in the church is thus the symbolic realization of this wish of the childish ego—the wish to return to the mother.

Just as the Hebrew Father image survives in Christianity in a modified form, the later Jewish religious community, the synagogue, became the model for the early Jewish Christian church. After the time of Judas Maccabæus the synagogue was the true "daughter of Israel." In her was kept alive what "the faithful" believed to be Jehovah's promise to restore the Kingdom to its ancient glory. She was to become the New Jerusalem, the Holy City. "Thus saith the Lord of Hosts. I am jealous for Zion with great jealousy; I am jealous for her with great wrath. I will return unto Zion and dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. . . . Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem, thy King cometh unto thee." Thus the symbolism with which the later Jewish believers pictured the Holy City came to be applied to the religious congregation, and finally passed over to the Christian church. The church, too, became the City of God, the New Jerusalem.

It is an interesting psychological fact that the mother image—even as wife or bride of deity, which had been so carefully excluded from the rigid monotheism of the Hebrews,

persisted, nevertheless, and provided the imagery through which emotional attachment to the community was expressed. The Jews who were scattered in the Dispersion, clinging as they did to their ethnic religion, came to cherish the hope of a return to the native land. It is natural for men to speak of the homeland as "the mother country." Thus the return became associated with the unconscious infantile wish to return to the Mother which we have seen plays a large and important part in religion. Similarly the thought of the return of their deity to the ancestral seat of worship —a communal reconciliation with the Father, gave rise to the symbolism of a reunion of the Mother and the Father. The Hebrews, conceiving of the community in terms of the mother image, "projected" upon the mother the sense of sin which they felt alienated them from the father. Thus Hosea says:

> Ye have plowed wickedness, ye have reaped iniquity; ye have eaten the fruit of lies; for thou didst trust in thy way, in the multitude of thy mighty men. Therefore shall a tumult arise among thy people, and all thy fortresses shall be

destroyed, as Shalman destroyed Beth-Arbel in the day of battle: the mother was dashed in pieces with her children. . . . Therefore shall the land mourn, and everyone that dwelleth therein shall languish, with the beasts of the field and the birds of the heavens; yea, the fishes of the sea also shall be taken away. Yet let no man strive, neither let any man reprove; for thy people are as they that strive with the priest. And thou shalt stumble in the day, and the prophet also shalt stumble with thee in the night; and I will destroy thy mother.

And I will betroth thee unto me forever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in justice, and in loving-kindness, and in mercies. I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness; and thou shalt know Jehovah. . . . And I will sow her unto me in the earth; and I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy; and I will say to them that were not my people, Thou art my people; and they shall say, Thou art my God.[1]

[1] Hosea, 2:2-4; 4:3-6; 10:13-14; 13:9; 2:19, 20, 23. Revised version American Standard Edition, 1901.

Isaiah says:

> But Zion said, Jehovah hath forsaken me, and the Lord hath forgotten me. Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, these may forget, yet will not I forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me. Thy children make haste; thy destroyers and they that made thee waste shall go forth from thee. Lift up thine eyes round about, and behold: all these gather themselves together, and come to thee. As I live, saith Jehovah, thou shalt surely clothe thee with them all as with an ornament, and gird thyself with them, like a bride. . . .
>
> Thus saith Jehovah, Where is the bill of your mother's divorcement, wherewith I have put her away? or which of my creditors is it to whom I have sold you? Behold, for your iniquities were ye sold, and for your transgressions was your mother put away.[1]

Jung says that the city is often a symbol of

[1] Isaiah, 49:14-18, 50.

the mother. Such symbolism often appears in biblical literature. Again in certain myths the mother, daughter, and wife are often identified and the unconscious substitutes one of these images for the other. Thus the return to the mother may appear as the union with the wife. Psychologists have often called attention to the frequency with which men marry women who resemble their mothers or sisters. Brill, who has made a special study of this phenomenon, says:

> When we say that the man is fixed on the mother or the woman on the father, we do not mean the parents as they look to-day, but as they appeared when the children were still infants. At that early age of the child's life the mother and father looked different and also behaved differently. The influence of such a fixation upon the parent is only too apparent in the later selection of the adult. Given a number of women to choose from, a man will invariably select the woman that has been more or less selected for him in the unconscious. That is to say, if everything is normal he will be guided from

the very outset by the image of his own mother. If conditions are not normal, however, his selection will be controlled by the reaction formed against it. . . .

In normal cases the individual always gravitates toward the parent image, and it is for this reason that husband and wife resemble each other's parents. I have seen numerous cases where the wife resembled the husband's mother or sister to such an unusual degree that one could hardly tell the difference between the two. Thus a New York boy upon the death of his father left his home and went to California where he was brought up by an uncle. When he married he came east with his wife on his honeymoon, and the moment his mother saw her she declared that the latter looked just like his younger sister Jane. In fact, she insisted that she saw the marked resemblance from the photograph her son had sent her, but she was quite sure of it now. He walked with his wife on the avenue one day and his sister's classmate, who did not live in New York, ran up to her and kissed her

> warmly, thinking that she was her friend Jane. People mistook his wife for his sister so frequently that he finally began to be aware of the resemblance himself. I have five photographs, three of his wife and two of his sister, pasted on a cardboard and I have shown them to quite a number of people, some of whom are artists, and there was only one man who could tell the difference between the two women.[1]

So in the Bible "Jerusalem is the mother of us all"; she is also often the daughter of Zion. The prophet Jeremiah compares the daughter of Zion to a comely woman. Again the city is "the daughter of my people." Isaiah says:

> For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until her righteousness go forth as brightness, and her salvation as a lamp that burneth. And the nations shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory; and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of Jehovah shall name. Thou shalt also be a crown of beauty in

[1] Brill, *Fundamental Conceptions of Psychoanalysis*, p. 317.

> the hand of Jehovah, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God. Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate: but thou shalt be called Hephzi-bah, and thy land Beulah: for Jehovah delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married. *For as a young man marrieth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee: and as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee.*[1]

Note the meanings of the terms "Hephzi-bah"—my delight is in her, and "Beulah"—married. Note also the implication of the passage I have italicized. Zion is both mother and bride, bride of her own sons, and of God (the father).

The symbolism in such passages is not unlike that which Freud tells us is characteristic of dream thought. The manifest dream thought, he says, is a symbolic expression of a hidden wish, but there appear in the dream, elements drawn from the experience of the day preceding the dream, and behind these associations lies the latent dream thought. This deeper stratum is of infantile origin and belongs to

[1] Isaiah, 62: 1-5.

the truly unconscious. In the Hebrew's habit of picturing the Holy City as mother, there is a like system of wishes and ideas which lies close to the contemporary experience of the prophet. His thought is first of all occupied with historical events and the manifest content of his "prophecy" deals with the tragic experiences and hopes of his nation. Israel is pictured as having sinned against her Lord. Her disobedience has brought upon her severe punishment. Her God has delivered her over to her enemies. But there is in her a saving remnant of faithful ones . These are the religious congregation. Through their efforts the nation is to be brought to repentance. It will turn again to Jehovah and he will be reconciled. Then Zion shall be exalted, her people shall be comforted, they shall be triumphant over the foreigners who have despised and mistreated them. The hour of Zion's victory is to be the culminating event in history.

We need not deal here with the Messianic wish fancies which belong to this level of the prophetic dream thought. At present we are concerned with the fact that the imagined reconciliation with the father, like the dream, borrows something from the infantile fixation

on the parent image. It was not a mere literary mannerism that caused the prophets to speak of this return in the symbolic language of the mother-father relationship. This is, as we have seen, the imagery in which the religious conflict and its solution commonly expresses itself. Jerusalem the mother is to be reunited with the Father. But Jerusalem is also to be restored to her faithful children. It is really the believers who are to be reconciled with the Father; with this reconciliation the scattered children of Israel return to the mother city. They return to the mother, their earthly troubles are over, there is eternal happiness and peace. Apocalyptic literature abounds in imagery of this sort. Thus by symbolizing, by disguising, the wish for the infantile return as a politico-historical transaction, by mingling their wish fancy with the affairs of the day, the wish is unconsciously realized in a socially acceptable form. It is, as I said, "sublimated." Return to the mother no longer appears as the dreadful Œdipus wish, it is now the wish for the restored and happy religious community in which there is the security and compensation which the ego really sought in the imaginary return to the mother image.

Similarly, the Christian Church is the Holy City, the City of God, the Mother, the Bride. There is a hymn in which the church appears as the Holy City.

> Glorious things of thee are spoken,
> Zion, city of our God.

In this same hymn the Church is pictured as mother and the members as her children:

> See the streams of living waters,
> Springing from eternal love,
> Will supply thy sons and daughters
> And all fear and want remove.

Another hymn contains the verse:

> I love thy church, O God;
> Her walls before me stand,
> Dear as the apple of thine eye
> And graven on thy hand.

The Church exists as the holy city both on earth and in heaven. The longing for the latter appears as longing for return to the mother in the great hymn:

> O Mother, dear Jerusalem,
> When shall I come to thee?
> When shall my sorrows have an end?
> Thy joys when shall I see?

In common speech the Church is often spoken of as mother by both Catholics and Protestants . A prominent clergyman left one of the large protestant communions a number of years ago, and at the time he left he gave utterance to certain "heretical" opinions in respect to the doctrine and discipline of the church in which he had been brought up. A professor in the leading theological school of the denomination issued a public denunciation of the apostate, saying that he had "slapped his mother in the face."

Wholly in keeping with the repressed infantile wish, the Church is said to be both mother and bride (the Bride of Christ), and Christ is one with the Father and also one with the believer—a symbol as I have shown, of the infantile ego wish.

The church has one foundation
'Tis Jesus Christ the Lord;
She is the New Creation
By water and the Blood.

From heaven He came and sought her
To be his Holy Bride;
With his own blood he bought her
And for her life he died.

The same imagery appears in the book of Revelation:

> And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of the throne saying, Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and he shall dwell with them, and they shall be his peoples, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God: and he shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and death shall be no more; neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain, any more; the first things are passed way. . . .
>
> And there came one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls, who were laden with the seven last plagues; and he spake with me, saying, Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the wife of the Lamb. And he carried me away in the Spirit to a mountain great and high, and showed me the holy city Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, having the glory of God: . . .
>
> And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And he that heareth, let him say, Come.

> And he that is athirst, let him come: he that will, let him take the water of life freely.[1]

For a further and rather striking example of this type of symbolism, let the reader recall the editorial headings which the translators of the King James version of the Bible published in explanation of the Song of Solomon. These writers did not feel at all that they were disparaging the church in thus picturing it as mother and bride. In fact, it was through such symbols that they sought to express their deep and sincere love for it. It is their love for the church which has value for our study. The church thus becomes the substitute for the object of that regressive love which would otherwise work serious injury to the psyche. It is consequently a means of grace, it is more than a delightful form of association among like-minded people. Membership in it completes the process of redemption. The symbolism which is used to express this feeling for the church is the language of the "Œdipus complex," and of this complex Freud says:

> The son, even as a small child, begins to develop an especial tenderness for his

[1] Rev. 21: 2-4; 21: 9-10; 22: 14.

mother, whom he considers as his own property, and feels his father to be a rival who puts into question his individual possession; and in the same manner the little daughter sees in her mother a person who is a disturbing element in her tender relationship with her father, and who occupies a position that she could very well fill herself. One learns from these observations to what early years these ideas extend back—ideas which we designate as the *Œdipus complex,* because this myth realizes with a very slightly weakened effect the two extreme wishes which grow out of the situation of the son—to kill his father and take his mother to wife. I do not wish to maintain that the Œdipus complex covers entirely the relation of the child to its parents; this relation can be much more complicated. Furthermore, the Œdipus complex is more or less well developed; it may even experience a reversal, but it is a customary and very important factor in the psychic life of the child; and one tends rather to underestimate than to overestimate its influence and the developments which may follow

from it. In addition, children frequently react to the Œdipus idea through stimulation by the parents, who in the placing of their affection are often led by sex differences, so that the father prefers the daughter, the mother the son; or again, where the marital affection has cooled, and this love is substituted for the outworn love.

One cannot maintain that the world was very grateful to psychoanalytic research for its discovery of the Œdipus complex. On the contrary, it called forth the strongest resistance on the part of adults; and persons who had neglected to take part in denying this proscribed or tabooed feeling-relationship later made good the omission by taking all value from the complex through false interpretations. According to my unchanged conviction there is nothing to deny and nothing to make more palatable. One should accept the fact, recognized by the Greek myth itself, as inevitable destiny. On the other hand, it is interesting that this Œdipus complex, cast out of life, was yielded up to poetry and given the freest

play. O. Rank has shown in a careful study how this very Œdipus complex has supplied dramatic literature with a large number of motives in unending variations, derivations and disguises, also in distorted forms such as we recognize to be the work of a censor. . . .

. . . we speak of love when we emphasize the psychic side of sex-impulses, and disregard or for a moment wish to forget the fundamental physical or "sensual" demands of the instincts. At the time when the mother becomes the object of love, the psychic work of suppression which withdraws the knowledge of a part of his sexual goal from his consciousness has already begun in the child. The selection of the mother as the object of love involves everything we understand by the Œdipus complex which has come to have such great significance in the psychoanalytic explanation of neuroses, and which has had no small part in arousing opposition to psychoanalysis.[1]

We are not here dealing with the Œdipus complex as such. Through the Church a whole-

[1] Freud, *A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis*, pp. 174, 175, 285.

some realization of the wish is achieved. It would be strange indeed if the Church, inspiring men's affections as it has, did not cause them to express their love of it in terms of what was not only the first and often the tenderest love of their lives, but is also closely related to the hunger for love which gives rise to the whole transaction of redemption from sin.

The fellowship of the religious group thus is a check upon the regressive tendency, transference to the object is possible in and through it. A special and spiritually more congenial form of the social environment is created. There is a new social object in which the security and love and spiritual tutelage, and maternal care which were often vainly sought in the world of struggle may be found. The childhood fancy is thus *socialized.*

The socialization which is achieved through the Church is often not different from that which is found in any "worldly" fellowship. But for those to whom membership in the Church is a religious act, adjustment is made, not to the human environment as such, but to a specially modified social situation. The Church exists within the world, but is not of it. Within the Church one submits himself—or is supposed to

—to certain rules of faith and practice. Here obedience, conformity, credulity, trust, deference to authority and tradition, become modes of adaptation to a degree not possible in the ordinary affairs of life. The church member in exchange for his spiritual independence gains certain immunities. There are problems which he can feel he need not meet. They have been solved for him. It is his merely to keep the faith once delivered to the saints. This, too, may be no small task, but it is a task of a different nature from that which confronts those who take an experimental attitude toward life.

Thus the Church is in its way a house of refuge and of escape. Standing in the midst of the confusion and sordidness of the world, it appears to be the presence of another and better world. To the weary it is rest; to the sorrowing, consolation; to the helpless, strength; to the despairing, hope. There is relief from a world that is "too much with us." Here, because all seem to believe what everyone wishes to believe, a special environment is created in which the wish for a more congenial existence may for the time possess the function of the real. Ordinarily the facts of experience and the words and actions of the people about

us prevent our ascribing reality to the fancies which are prompted by our inner desires. To be sure, there are certain "illusions" in the thinking of the most realistic of us—necessary fictions without which even science is impossible. But adaptation to nature and to society demands that as far as possible we distinguish between fact and fancy. In sleep, such a distinction is not necessary and is not made. Hence the wish is fulfilled in the hallucinations of the dream.

If it were possible for a group of people to shut out of their immediate consciousness the voice of natural fact and to create each for his neighbors a modification of the social environment so that action within that group, on the assumption that certain daydreams were true, would become an acceptable type of mutual adjustment, the daydreams would take on the appearance of reality. And if the interest which held the group together were very strong, the "realities" which existed for and within the group would hold their own in defiance of the conflicting reals of the outside world. Something like this occurs in the psychology of all permanent crowds, and notably in the Church. There are many beliefs which

cannot survive if the crowd which supports them is disintegrated. The church is thus an important aid to faith. People need a Church precisely in order that they may thus hold and in some measure realize "truths" which individual experience would render untrue.

When the religious fellowship is modernized and its truths made to conform to the truth of actual experience and contemporary knowledge of the world, it ceases to be a church. It also loses its appeal. It is a significant fact that those religious bodies which men have tried to "reform," and bring their practices and their dogma into harmony with modern thought fail in popular support to just the extent that the process of modernization is thorough-going. The liberal Protestant denominations in America, though in one sense they are America's most characteristically modern contribution to religion, show little if any increase in strength. The masses appear to have little interest in a religion which is founded in "reason," or in a church which speaks the language of to-day. The world to-day is that from which religion seeks to escape. Those churches whose services are conducted in dead languages, whose attitude even to

known facts of experience and science is most uncompromisingly hostile, those which on the whole are most anachronistic and can without faltering give men a miracle and sanctuary—those are the churches that endure. They do not endure in spite of their bold defiance of the logic of experience, but because of it.

I have tried to show that the religious group differs from ordinary forms of association; that it is symbolically represented in terms of the mother image; that in it the ego is in a way socialized because the emotional interest becomes attached to an object to which it is easier to "transfer" and so adapt oneself, than to the ordinary objects.

This transference phenomenon is important because it is accompanied by a practice which regularly takes place in the course of psychoanalysis when the patient "transfers" to the physician. In both cases there is a "confession." Freud says of the transference:

> We see our patient, who should be occupying himself only with finding a way out of his painful conflicts, become especially interested in the person of the physician. Everything connected with

this person is more important to him than his own affairs and diverts him from his illness. Dealings with him are very pleasant for the time being. He is especially cordial, seeks to show his gratitude wherever he can, and manifests refinements and merits of character that we hardly had expected to find. . . . The new fact which we recognize unwillingly is termed *transference*. We mean a transference of emotions to the person of the physician. . . .

If the patient is to fight the normal conflict that our analysis has revealed against the suppressions, he requires a tremendous impetus to influence the desirable decision which will lead him back to health. Otherwise he might decide for a repetition of the former issue and allow those factors which have been admitted to consciousness to slip back again into suppression. The deciding vote in this conflict is not given by his intellectual penetration —which is neither strong nor free enough for such an achievement—but only by his relation to the physician. Inasmuch as his transference carries a positive sign, it

> invests the physician with authority and is converted into faith for his communications and conceptions. Without transference of this sort, or without a negative transfer, he would not even listen to the physician and to his arguments.[1]

Thus it is that through the emotional relationship toward the physician the patient becomes willing to co-operate in the task of his own cure. He is willing to talk freely, his resistance is broken down. The transference is accompanied by what might be called a confession—a willingness to reveal the facts of one's past and of his secret thought life.

James in *The Varieties of Religious Experience* says of confession as it occurs in religion:

> In regard to Confession I will also be most brief, saying my word about it psychologically, not historically. Not nearly as widespread as sacrifice, it corresponds to a more inward and moral stage of sentiment. It is part of the general system of purgation and cleansing which one feels one's self in need of, in order to be in right relations to one's deity. For him

[1] Freud, *A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis*, pp. 379, 382, 385.

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who confesses, shams are over and realities have begun; he has exteriorized his rottenness. If he has not actually got rid of it he at least no longer smears it over with a hypocritical show of virtue—he lives at least upon a basis of veracity. The complete decay of the practice of confession in Anglo-Saxon communities is a little hard to account for. Reaction against popery is of course the historic explanation, for in popery confession went with penances and absolution, and other inadmissible practices. But on the side of the sinner himself it seems as if the need ought to have been too great to accept so summary a refusal of its satisfaction. One would think that in more men the shell of secrecy would have had to open, the pent-in-abscess to burst and gain relief, even though the ear that heard the confession were unworthy. The Catholic church, for obvious utilitarian reasons, has substituted auricular confession to one priest for the more radical act of public confession. We English-speaking Protestants, in the general self-reliance and unsociability of our nature, seem

to find it enough if we take God alone into our confidence." [1]

This is all James has to say about this phenomenon. True, indeed, the act of confessing may place one "upon a basis of veracity." But no explanation is given as to just how it is that confession is part of the general system of purgation and cleansing, why one feels that he comes into better relations with the deity when he has confessed his sin to man or why it is that the word "confess" is used to designate the act of communicating both one's sins and his faith.

This last is perhaps more than a coincidence. It would seem that in both the confession of faith and of sin there is the same need. The ego requires for its own self-appreciation the support and assurance of the group. Self-owning spirits who are sure of themselves, do not seem to have this need. They, too, are social, they do not have furtive secrets which they shrink from revealing. They communicate their feelings easily and naturally when the occasion requires, but they are not impelled to such self-revelation. Only those are so impelled who have something which is

[1] James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, pp. 462-3.

consciously or unconsciously concealed and is in conflict with the ego impulses.

Let us see if there is common psychological material back of the confession of both faith and sin. The word "confession" denotes the admission of facts concerning oneself to the communication of which there is *resistance.* This resistance so far as it consciously affects the confession of sin is more in evidence when the sin to which confession is made is specific, than when one confesses that he is generally a "miserable sinner." The reverse of this is true for the unconscious. When the latter is involved, the confession often reveals what Brill calls "substitute memories." Whether the sin is sin in general or a concrete misdeed, resistance must be overcome before confession is made, and it is the *overcoming of this resistance* which dissolves the condition of isolation and furtiveness—the torment of suspended libido—and permits the transference. In the early Christian church, it would seem that confession of sin was made, not to the priest alone, but to the brethren. In the Epistle of James the Christians are told to confess their faults one to another and to pray for one another.

If, as I am trying to show, one of the primary

functions of religion is that of keeping up the "personality-picture" or self-appreciative feeling, it may appear paradoxical that this function is served by self-revelation of a humiliating kind. Yet such is the case. "Where sin abounded, there did grace much more abound." Popular imagination always dwells with more sympathy upon the picture of the prodigal son returning after wasting his substance in riotous living to receive the father's kiss than upon the elder son who does not cry, "Father, I have sinned." One may envy the prospects of the faithful son, but somehow one does not think of him as a hero. It is the son with a past with whom we unconsciously identify ourselves. One suspects that the behavior of the elder brother toward the reconciled vagabond is in part motivated by unconscious envy, just as it frequently is when moralists look upon bad people with righteous indignation. We are so constructed that we must make something of an effort to resist making a hero of one who has had his fling. I recall a swaggering song that I once heard in vaudeville, "I'm a bad, bad nigger from a bad, bad land."

When, after being bad, one repents, the stigma is removed. He may then in most

ego, we should expect that the same force that pushes these ego impulses back into the unconscious would to some extent lend even to these disguised forms of expression, a certain feeling of shame. What other feeling could ever have prompted the hymn, "Jesus, and shall it ever be, a mortal man ashamed of thee?" Why, else, should men feel that there is merit in confessing Christ before men? In such confession there is an admission of need. One reveals the fact that he is obliged to depend upon something which he feels is not himself for spiritual integrity. Thus in the confession of faith there is a mixture again of humility and self-display. It is not mere bashfulness that causes the average young convert to be shy. When the shyness is noticeably absent the believer may give the impression that he confesses too much—just as conscious egoism is often an over-compensation for the unconscious feeling of inferiority. We all know certain believers who persistently exhibit their faith in much the same manner that crippled beggars display their wounds.

In early Christian times, when the church was persecuted, confession of faith required no little courage and was a mark of merit. It

often led to martyrdom. But the belief that such confession is a duty is characteristic of both Christianity and Judaism in all periods of their history. When the Hebrews were a prosperous and conquering nation, it did not require effort for one to say that he was an Israelite. There seems to have been no thought in the minds of the Hebrews during their period of historic dominance that one did a meritorious thing in confessing his God. After the captivity the situation was different. The Jews became a *religious* community. They were no longer a nation group in the political sense. Political supremacy appears everywhere to be an aid to self-appreciation; one sees evidences of it to-day among the English and French and especially in America. With the loss of national political prestige, men resort to various devices to keep up the ego feeling. The Jews, scattered as they were in the dispersion, are no exception to the rule. They were a "peculiar people," they were foreigners wherever they went, and they were a minority group. Humanity everywhere receives a minority group of strangers with about the same degree of hospitality as that with which a stray fowl is received in a barnyard. It was

not easy to confess the God of Israel; a feeling of inferiority had often to be overcome.

Hence as Israel ceased to be a nation and became a church, confession of faith became an act which the group, in the interest of self-preservation, required of its members. One now performed a duty in the act of confession. He showed his loyalty to his people and their traditions. Proud as he might be of his Jewish birth, he was often made to feel that the fact that he was a Jew stood between him and those who manifestly did not hold the fact in the same regard that he did. The insults and persecution which Jews have to endure even to-day at the hands of Christians are only a continuation of the treatment they have suffered since the day their ancient capital was ravished by Babylonian armies.

Thus the Psalmist, finding virtue in the triumph over adverse circumstances, said, "I will confess Thee among the heathen." And again: "How shall we sing Jehovah's song in a foreign land?" "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her skill; let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if I remember thee not; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy."

Thus confession becomes a virtue when it reveals membership in a cult, rather than in a dominant culture community. With Christianity, confession becomes more than a virtue, it is a requirement for salvation. The writers of the New Testament put in the mouth of the Christ such words as "Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I confess before my Father in Heaven." St. Paul writes to the church in Rome that "with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." The Christian group struggling with a social environment in which it was treated with contempt, represented its hope of supremacy in the world with the statement that "every tongue shall confess that Jesus is Lord."

Thus through confession of faith a virtuous act is performed, an act required by the religious group—and I might add likewise, required by sects and partisan groups of all sorts. There is something about the assent to crowd opinion which men love,—something in the repetition of certain words which seems to be almost magical. Hence the members of any cult group, whether patriotic, socialist, prohibitionist, or religious, require of one another that each state his faith in

almost the identical words that all the others use. Such phrases become the *passwords* by which the members assure themselves of the orthodoxy of one another. In verbal confession of the faith, the group purpose is shared: one assents to the supremacy of his crowd. Membership in the special community is established, one "belongs" when he can speak the lauguage of his cult. Confession of faith then sets the believers apart from unbelievers. It helps draw them together in close fellowship and aids in the transference.

Of confession in general, it remains to be said that men commonly take the view of themselves that is held by the group to which they seek transference. When the group is conceived of in terms of the parent image confession is a mark of deference. We do not feel uneasy in keeping from children certain secrets, because, however much affection we have for them, we do not defer to them; we do not recognize their authority and their right to know what we have done or what are our inner thoughts. But when we as believers assume a filial attitude toward the religious group, we recognize in it a similar authority to that of the parent. We defer; we are

estranged and feel guilty in the possession of secret knowledge. The child often has this feeling, and the secret knowledge is often of an infantile sexual nature. So, in confessing to the group, there is a feeling that at the same time one performs an act at once humiliating and meritorious which secures the forgiveness of the Father in heaven. One tells the mother, and thus the father is reconciled. He has a mediator. The church and her priesthood are mediators, making intervention for sin.

We need not regard the parental image here as necessarily modeled upon the actual parents. Often it is a form of compensation. If the child confessed certain things to the actual parents, he would doubtless be punished. So with the parent images in religion it is the ideal parents that are set up. These are understanding and ready to forgive if we confess. Voluntary self-accusation, and the submission expressed in open assent to the faith atone for the wrong.

The mechanism here would seem to be derived largely from the fact that most men must—because they still retain the filial attitude whenever possible—get their good conscience from without. Many may have it only

upon parental authority. They require assurance from an external source before they may quite sustain their self-appreciation. The symbolic representation of the religious group as the mother emboldens the communicant to make confession and thus escape from his psychic isolation. Here as elsewhere, we find that the impelling motive in religious behavior is a form of self-interest expressed in terms of the child-parent relationship.

The impelling motive is not the only psychic factor in the behavior of the religious community. The group consciousness of religious people may easily take on the common characteristics of the crowd mind. Beginning as a special separate group, "a saving remnant in a lost world," the religious community in time becomes a powerful social force. It seeks to become the community itself. It resorts to an active propaganda to gain larger numbers of adherents; it grows in strength. It soon learns that it may command the attention and respect of rulers of this world. It must be taken into account. It has power, and there is no group, however lofty its profession, that will not yield to the temptation to use its power for the gratification of the self-appreciative

desires of its members, once it finds that it has such power. *The religious group like all crowds, justifies its will to power by professions of moral principles.* It is not seeking a selfish dictatorship, it is inspired by love. It seeks only to reform the abuses of society to save the world.

Now when any group strives to impose its will upon society as a whole the moral ideals which it professes are those of the great rank and file; they are the dilemmas of mediocrity. Mediocrity finds in the teachings and moral principles of the religious group a justification and a weapon in its struggle to dominate the earth. The popular leaders of the group become those men who are most successful in the appeal to the prejudices, fears, and self-conceit of the multitude. Ideas which were originally figures of speech, suggesting to the minds of the initiated certain possibilities of experience, became for the religious crowd and its leaders hardly more than external forms. The faith is reduced to simple, crude dogma, and the crowd demands that this dogma receive the assent of all men. And there are certain moral precepts which the founders of the cult voluntarily imposed upon themselves—and

found their freedom and joy in living according to a certain discipline or rule of life—which the crowd now would impose upon everyone.

The crowd can never admit that there is any possible alternative to its good except that of deliberate and malicious wickedness; it holds that these rules of conduct are universally applicable; that they are the right and that all other ways of life are wrong. Hence the religious crowd strives to make its rules of life compulsory and legislation is sought in order that the aid of the state may be invoked to force its own standards upon all. The religious life is no longer a matter of choice. Its values are no longer permitted to lie open, inviting those who naturally need them to enter freely. There is pushing and crowding and coercion. In the attempt to gain still greater popular support the crowd may substitute vulgar caricatures for its values. Men who have no comprehension of the subtleties and complexities of the spirit may dress up their own survival values in the robes of "revealed truth," and around these pseudo-religious issues a bitter partisan struggle may be waged. This is especially likely to happen in a democracy, where in the attempt to gain

the interest and support of the largest numbers, all the values of civilization are brought down to the commonplace.

Elsewhere I have sought to show that the crowd mind appears, not in the multitude as such, but that it is an unconscious modification of the meaning of certain control-ideas by which a pseudo-social environment is created that will permit of the escape of certain impulses which are ordinarily repressed by society. There are three common traits which are characteristic of all crowds; first, a dogmatic, absolutist way of thinking, second, a thinly disguised egomania, and third, a spirit of more or less open hostility which is often apparently justified as devotion to moral ideals. When the religious community becomes a crowd, any or all of these traits will appear.

Dogmatism is so characteristic of popular religious thought, that many people identify the two and think that religion could not exist without its creeds. To accept a creed is the popular substitute for being religious, and when the creed is denied it is generally thought that religion has been attacked. Yet the religious experience really needs doctrine only as a symbolic expression of the interests of the inner

psyche. The spirit which affirms certain beliefs with the air of finality and resorts to divine authority is not the religious spirit as such. Doctrinal systems are but the formal masquerade of religion. Yet to the many, these things are sanctities to which every knee must bow. Crowds of all sorts, political crowds, crowds of moral reformers, crowds which are parties to the economic class struggle, provincial groups, all hold their ideas in just this way. Notions which are at bottom mere propaganda, fabricated as special pleading in order to gain converts, catch the attention of the unthinking and remain fixed. Crowds do not seek truth; each is always sure that it and it alone has it in its final form. Crowds do not revise their presuppositions; their intellectual activity consists merely in devising plausibilities which will make old beliefs credible. Crowds do not encourage the spirit of investigation. To investigate is to question, to suspend action. To question crowd ideas is disloyal; to suspend action is to hold aloof when possibly united activity is demanded. Crowds disintegrate when their beliefs are submitted to critical inquiry. *Crowds do not seek to verify their hypotheses, but to vindicate their "principles."*

Hence every crowd appears as the champion of some infallible world-saving idea, which is expressed in vague and sweeping generalizations.

We shall see in a later chapter some of the psychological reasons for the existence of creed and dogma in religion. At present I wish to point out the fact that as the religious community becomes a crowd its symbols are congealed as it were into doctrinal systems. The very fact that religion is in its way a "total reaction" to the world means that its language is often of such an abstract and general nature that it easily provides the crowd mind with a set of ready made *a priori* ideas which may be used for the purposes of the crowd's own.

Thus the religious community comes to hold its beliefs in true crowd fashion. It becomes a virtue never to change one's mind. Persons who think differently from the religious group are enemies of the Deity. One forgets that the primary functions of dogma are to keep the crowd together, to secure uniformity of behavior among its members, and overawe those who stand in its way. Religious dogmas have thus a sociological rather than a metaphysical value. Ideas have the latter only when men love truth rather than power. And lovers of

truth have as a rule too much impartiality, self-criticism, skepticism, and curiosity to make good crowd men of any sort. They are still teachable, however religious they may be.

A second characteristic of the crowd mind is ego-mania. Crowds always puff themselves up. The crowd-minded patriot who says, "My country right or wrong" may or may not be justified by fact in placing his country first. What he only vaguely realizes is that in doing so he is really praising himself. It is interesting to notice how a crowd movement permits men to exhibit themselves in all sorts of ways without a feeling of shame. Men will parade the streets in gaudy regalia, will make street-corner speeches, will assert that they and they alone have a solution for the ultimate problems of existence, will promise themselves a future triumphant dictatorship over all, will persuade themselves that such a supremacy of their own kind would not only be a great blessing to all humanity, but also the culmination of evolution or divine prophecy.

Often during the months when the Russian revolution was new and certain groups were fascinated with the thought of world-wide social revolution, I have heard radicals say, without

the least notion of the humor of it, that the proletariat, being a class of supermen, was justified in taking control of affairs. In fact, this egoism of crowds is always manifest. This is why audiences insist upon being flattered. It is why the average man believes in democracy. It is so characteristic of crowd behavior that one may almost say that the crowd is a device for self-flattery through the exaltation of one's own kind or group.

The assertion that the working class is a class of supermen has its parallels in the behavior of religious groups. Religious people are "God's chosen," the "saved," the "elect," the "good," the "moral element of society." Others are "sinners," "heathen," "anti-Christ," "Gentiles," "children of this world," the "unregenerate," the "damned"—just as to the ancient Greek all the rest of mankind were "barbarians."

This egoism is closely related to the third characteristic of the crowd mind, its hostility. In the disease paranoia, these two factors are commonly present and have certain psychological causal connections. Crowds are commonly hostile and resentful of anything which challenges their fiction of superiority. This is

the common cause of war, race riots, and social unrest. At a recent so-called exposition of the Einstein theory through the medium of the motion picture, a caption was shown which contained a statement to the effect that only a score of men in the world could understand or follow Mr. Einstein's calculations. The audience hissed. Though it is fair to say that not one of them knew what "Relativity" was all about, they resented the implied slur upon their native intelligence in the statement of the great mathematician's intellectual superiority.

This note of hostility gives rise to the cruelty which is characteristic of mobs and lies just under the skin of the most peaceable crowd. It is often manifest in the behavior of religious communities. From the earliest times, priests have blessed armies going out to fight. When a nation is at war, patriotism takes on many of the qualities of religion. Most religious communities when large enough and sufficiently well established, have practiced persecution—Christianity especially has had an unhappy history in this respect.

We are inclined to persuade ourselves that the day of religious persecution is over. Thanks to the spirit of tolerance which has been cul-

tivated in the better educated by our scientific advance and the study of the humanities, some gain has been made. But we must also remember that political organization in our time, taking precedence of the interests of the religious community, has weakened its power. But that the spirit which persecutes is not dead is evident even in democratic Protestant America. When theological ideas may no longer be used successfully to justify the indulgence in cruelty toward the object of crowd hatred, religious groups may resort to the dogma of conventional morality. Much of the "reform" legislation which has in recent years been secured at the instigation of certain religious groups is motivated by this feeling. It is, moreover, no mere accident that a movement like the Ku-Klux Klan which capitalizes religious and racial hatred, and, if we may trust our information, gratuitously takes upon itself the extra-legal enforcement of our moral taboos, has sprung up in this country.

The religious community, like other crowd movements, shows deep antipathy to the unbeliever and the apostate. He who withholds assent is a living witness to values contrary to those held by the group of believers. He

is a challenge to their faith. For crowd ideas may function successfully where a special social environment is created which is congenial to them—that is, where the whole number who are present and who count believe them. If one to whom the group is obliged to listen withholds assent, his very presence is a fact which is in conflict with the escape from the real which the crowd mind demands. The religious group in days gone by removed him from its midst. His "wickedness" was a fact which justified it in treating him with the severest cruelty. More recently the group seeks to explain away his nonconformity if he in other respects succeeds in winning its admiration. The attitude of certain religious writers toward the religious beliefs of Abraham Lincoln is a case in point.

If the heresy cannot be explained away, the non-conformist, however great he may be, is condemned and scorned, and his name remains to be an object of indignant attack long after he is dead. It is not an unheard-of thing for a religious group to sit and listen with every evidence of approval while a popular preacher dwells upon the "wickedness" of Thomas Paine, the alleged miserable life of Darwin, the "terrible death" of Ingersoll or the deliberate in-

fidelity and stupid ignorance of a Spencer or Huxley or Haeckel,—assuring his hearers that such enemies of God are now suffering the eternal torment which they justly deserve. It is of course a pitiable spectacle, and religion as we have sought to understand it should not be directly held accountable for it. This is a crowd phenomenon, and while the religious community is not necessarily or by any means uniformly crowd-minded, yet the sectarian and partisan spirit may easily attach itself to religion. The multitude is ever prone to rush in to the religious group and deck itself out in religious formulas in the vain attempt to save itself from itself. The many would fain enter the special community and be at once exclusive and common. The masses having always a hunger for mystery and deliverance from the common lot, are attracted by that which speaks of a kingdom which is not of this world. They eagerly clutch at or revere, though at a distance, that which they think gives "goodness" by magic. Entering the religious community, they degrade its values, caricature its sanctities and bring to it the partisan rivalry which they manifest in other spheres. *The religious group ceases to be an escape from the world and*

*becomes one of the contending parties in the social struggle.* The culture community is transformed into the cult.

Thus a crowd is formed whose impelling motives may be wholly irrevelant to those which led to the establishment of the religious community. And the crowd mind is the same—"human all too human," whether its behavior is that of throwing bricks in the street or pantomiming the solemn gestures of the religious. In the latter case the crowd would make itself holy and irresistible, render itself immune to criticism, disarm opposition, and secure its interests, while appearing to itself to be speaking the language of eternity. But though the crowd may thus make use of the externals of religion, the true religious community is not the crowd. Sometimes it withdraws further within—a community within a community, an esoteric group of the initiated. Sometimes it seeks to transform the crowd with the light of its own inspirations and sometimes it is lost to view in the struggle. But always it is there, recognized or unrecognized, making the expressions of its own experience the norms which the others copy, and out of its struggle for orientation to reality, creating the values which

the others strive to attain. Out of its symbolic appreciation of the human significance of reality it elaborates the dream which brings consolation to men in the pain and drudgery of their existence, and an imaginary escape from facts which men find dreary and make sordid.

## VII

### *Forms of Religious Behavior*

IT is said that religion is a life. The early Christians spoke of their movement as "the way." Buddhism is "the path." Among Catholics "religious" orders are distinguished from the secular in that the former live according to more rigidly prescribed forms of behavior. Thus we may say that religion manifests itself in certain actions. "By their fruits ye shall know them." Obviously, then, there are certain modes of conduct which are generally recognized as religious, and others which seem to have no religious significance. From the behaviorist standpoint, all mental life is reaction of some sort to stimulus. Is it possible to discover a psychological principle which will enable us to distinguish a religious act from one which is not religious?

Such a distinction is difficult because deeds which are considered religious in one age or community may be indifferent or even anti-

religious or "sinful" in another. To make fire or slaughter animals is in certain communities considered religious behavior. To some the drinking of wine is a religious act. To others, this act is sinful. *Acts from which men abstain* on religious principle may also in a sense be held to have religious significance. Each religion has certain characteristic forms of abstinence. In one community it is negatively religious—sinful—to labor on the seventh day of the week; in another it is sinful to eat meat on the fifth day; in a third it is irreligious to touch a dog or have fellowship with an unbeliever.

Mediæval Catholicism sought to give to all the necessary daily actions of men broad religious significance. It placed sacraments at the moment of birth, adolescence, marriage, death. It conceived of the various occupations of men as acts of devotion. The peasant toiling in the field was doing what might be called "church work"; also the artisan, the soldier going out to fight for the holy sepulcher, the musician, and the painter devoting their genius to the glorification of Deity in worship, the philosopher who meditated upon the divine reason, the King who ruled by divine right.

With the reformation, first one and then another type of human effort was detached from church control and became wholly secular —first literature, then science, then philosophy, finally government and industry. While in Protestant countries there is still a general sense in which all conduct should be the expression of a will which is obedient to the law of God, yet in the strict sense religion has become a special interest. Protestants are disinclined to "mix religion with business or politics." In a sense therefore, Protestant Christianity is more aloof from daily affairs than other forms of religion. But then, it must be said that this divorce of belief and profession from practice appears to some extent in all forms of Christianity. Christians do not "live their religion" in the same way that Mohammedans and Jews seem to live theirs. Hence the non-Christian world, looking first at Christian teaching and then at the diplomacy, the commercial policies and everlasting warfare of so-called Christian nations, is perplexed and unable to reconcile such things with the teachings of the missionaries, and commonly believes that Christians are hypocrites.

This is not necessarily true. The very un-

worldly nature of the Christian system makes it very difficult, to say the least, to apply to the affairs of this world in which the so-called Christian nations play the leading rôle. Civilization in Christendom tends toward power organization, and the Christian tradition is in most cases retained chiefly as a form of imaginary escape. Christianity is an *ideal.*

As a way of belief and life, most people "profess" it because it helps to save men from a realistic sense of the brutal necessities of their lives, and I believe also that most men practice it to the extent that they feel they can afford such a spiritual luxury. But the fact remains that in Christendom especially religion has become largely a distinct and separate interest. Therefore we may speak of certain practices as "religious" acts and others as "worldly." Religious acts consist of ceremony, ritual, and discipline—the latter begin a special sort of morality. An examination of these forms of behavior will, I think, show that they are symptomatic and largely compulsive—that is, they, like the similar phenomena in the *neuroses,* are expressions of the unconscious wish and are often compromise solutions of the inner conflict to which we referred in an earlier

chapter. The believer often performs them as if they were ends in themselves, actions which he goes through almost automatically; and in such cases he feels a sense of guilt if he neglects to do these things or performs them in a manner other than that precribed.

There is a sense in which all ceremony may be compared to habit. Watson says that a habit is an acquired mode of response—a conditioned reflex. When bodily movements are no longer random, but are the results of a learning process which causes such an organization in nervous tissue that a certain stimulus is regularly followed by a specific response, a habit is formed. Thus the great bulk of human behavior consists of habits; and most habits, since they are organized modes of response to stimuli, are adaptive.

But there are many habits which do not bring the organisms into desired relations with the environment. Many neurotic people perform habitual acts which have no adaptive value. Often such habits are very annoying to the person who has them, yet he cannot rid himself of them. And when such is the case, psychopathologists say that one's behavior is "compulsive." There is a nervous disease in which

such compulsive habits regularly appear and are known to be symptoms the function of which is to find unconsciously a solution of a conflict of some sort. This disease is "compulsion neurosis," and the habit symptoms are called "ceremonialism." The important fact about the ceremonialism of the compulsion neuroses is that the *habits which are formed are not adaptations to environmental situations but are solutions of inner conflicts.*

Ceremonialism regularly appears in religious behavior, and, while it is often not "compulsive" in the sense that neurotic ceremonialism is compulsive, yet it is related to the latter in that religious ceremonialism is *nonadaptive* behavior. It is this fact, I think, which makes the difference between religious behavior as such and ordinary behavior. Religious ceremonies are not submitted to the ordinary criteria of behavior—that is, they are not commonly judged by the objective results in experience. Often they seem to be forms which are gone through as ends in themselves and are frequently practiced without regard to the results. It is said that Antiochus Epiphanes captured Jerusalem on the Sabbath day because the Jewish armies were at the time engaged not

in defending the city, but in the ceremonies of keeping the Sabbath. In the Gospels, there is an account of an incident in which the Christ shocks the religious people by healing a man on the Sabbath. I have known Protestant Christians to refrain from taking much-needed exercise rather than give up the ceremony of keeping Sunday in the conventional manner. A working woman who is a devout Catholic may be seen keeping fast during Lent, notwithstanding the fact that she is undernourished. One evening in New York City I saw a man stop at a subway entrance, with hundreds of people rushing by, and kneel down on the sidewalk and repeat a prayer, regardless of the fact that he was blocking the traffic during the rush hour. There are many religious orders whose members spend practically all their lives repeating again and again certain ceremonial words and actions. And there are the ceremonies of public worship from which religious people derive a feeling of satisfaction in repeating certain formulas. Just as there are people who would be miserable all day if, while dressing in the morning, they happened to put on the right shoe before the left, and others who cannot sleep at night unless they try

the doors and windows several times to reassure themselves that everything is properly locked, so there are religionists who cannot sleep unless they have repeated a prayer, or eat unless they have made the sign of the cross.

Thus much religious behavior consists in the regular repetition of certain gestures, attitudes, and verbal formulas in which one feels that he has done the right thing, not because he has made the response which an environmental situation would normally demand of him, but rather because he has performed certain stereotyped and biologically irrelevant movements in the prescribed manner. Let us note that when the ceremony is performed in the habitual way, the religionist feels that he has done something; when the customary words and gestures are not performed, he feels ill at ease. The occasion upon which the ceremonial act is performed is a sort of motor cue, the presence of which discharges the ceremonial pattern into action; it is not a problem which must be solved by such action as will bring the organism into satisfactory relations with its object.

Doubtless there survives in much religious ceremony something of that which Frazer has described as "sympathetic magic." This writer

holds that magic is the result of reasoning by analogy. He thinks that primitive people who do not understand the laws of cause and effect, substitute for such laws a logic of their own. Their ignorance of nature leads them to believe that they may influence the course of events by imitating them. Frazer's explanations appear plausible, but it makes magic too much a thing of the intellect. I think we gain more insight into the meaning of magic formulas if we hold them to be a sort of "philosophy of as if." They are symbolic expressions of wishes. Thus they are like the ceremonialism of the compulsion neurosis. With neurotics, the wish is repressed and the ceremonial behavior serves both as a disguised performance of the inhibited impulse and as a compromise. The likeness of the ceremony to the act of which it is a substitute becomes apparent upon analysis as the following example will show. This illustration was given to me by Dr. A. A. Brill. I quote with his permission.

> Compulsive actions of neurotics and religious rituals look practically alike and fundamentally serve the same purpose. The neurotic's ceremonial consists of small

observations, elaborations, restrictions, and arrangements which are always done in connection with certain acts of every-day life, in the same way if only possible. . . .

A young woman of twenty-five cannot bear the idea of wearing jewelry, but is afraid to tell about it, so she has to wear it on occasion. But before putting it on she goes through the following ceremonials: She waits until about five minutes before she has to leave her home, then lowers her head as if in prayer, counts up to one hundred in sums of twenty-five, as quickly as possible, then runs to her jewel box, opens it and closes it four times, and then grasps the ring and lavallière, and throws it on the floor, so that it rolls away. Then she looks for it with great excitement; sometimes cannot find it, and has to leave without it. This is always accompanied by a feeling of relief; usually, however, she finds it, and as she puts it on has to count again in twenty-fives until she reaches her destination.

Meaning: Her mother has a "diamond sunburst" which she craved years

ago when she was to attend a very nice dance. She asked her mother to let her wear it, and the latter said "My daughter, in one hundred years, when I will be dead you will have it, not before, unless your own husband will buy you one." Some time later there was another dance, where she was particularly anxious to shine, and while dressing the thought came to her, "If your mother were dead, you would have the sunburst." This frightened her as she recognized it as a wish, and she pushed it out of her mind, and as a punishment for it decided to stay home, but soon changed her mind and went to the ball. The reproaches disturbed her during the whole night, and the next day she vowed not to wear any jewelry on her neck for a whole year. Gradually the ban was generalized not to wear any jewelry; but as she was often asked why she did not put on this or that ring or lavallière, she had to wear them. The ceremonial, which was entirely unconscious to her (and all those ceremonials are just obsessive feelings) meant: Counting to one hundred meant that her mother was

now dead; counting it in twenty-fives, which was her own age, meant to identify herself with her mother. That is why she had to open and close the box four times. Throwing it on the floor meant to show that she really did not covet her mother's jewels, that she did not want them. Hence the feeling of relief when the ring sometimes rolled under the bed and she could not find it for the time being. Her hurrying in the process referred to an identification with her mother, for whom her father always had to wait when they went out to some affair, and often cried out: "Hurry! It is late!" This meant to her that she herself was now married and was hurrying to go with her own husband —which fulfilled the condition of her mother's statement, "Unless your husband will buy you one."

Freud says:

The chief manifestations of compulsion neurosis are these; the patient is occupied by thoughts that in reality do not interest him, is moved by impulses that appear alien to him, and is impelled to actions

which, to be sure, afford him no pleasure, but the performance of which he cannot possibly resist. The thoughts may be absurd in themselves or thoroughly indifferent to the individual; often they are absolutely childish and in all cases they are the result of strained thinking, which exhausts the patient, who surrenders himself to them most unwillingly. Against his will he is forced to brood and speculate as though it were a matter of life or death to him. The impulses which the patient feels within himself may also give a childish or ridiculous impression, but for the most part they bear the terrifying aspect of temptations to fearful crimes, so that the patient not only denies them, but flees from them in horror and protects himself from actual execution of his desires through inhibitory renunciations and restrictions upon his personal liberty. As a matter of fact he never, not a single time, carries any of these impulses into effect; the result is always that his evasion and precaution triumph. The patient really carries out only very harmless trivial acts, so-called compulsive acts, for the most

> part repetitions and ceremonious additions to the occupations of every-day life, through which its necessary performances —going to bed, washing, dressing, walking—become long-winded problems of almost insuperable difficulty.[1]

Thus it will be seen that among neurotics of a certain type, habits are formed which are of no value in the practical dealing with objective situations. They serve the inner psyche, are disguised expressions of its repressed impulses and wishes, and the patient is thus compelled by his unconcious wish or conflict to continue repeating certain acts or formulas often against his will. The continued repetition sets up individual ceremonies which become fixed habits.

Obviously, religious ceremonies do not correspond to those of the compulsive neurosis in all respects. Freud says that the latter are usually disguised expressions of tendencies to sex perversion which survive from infancy in the unconscious. The ceremonies of religion express wishes which are varied and are not necessarily repressed into the unconscious. Thus the repeating of prayers may express desires which are quite acceptable to consciousness.

[1] Freud, *A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis*, p. 222.

But many religious ceremonies have a *double motive,* one of which is conscious, the other repressed. Thus baptism is a ceremony of "purification" and the conscious wish is for release from sin and the attainment of higher spiritual values. But behind this wish are other *latent* desires. We have seen in an earlier chapter that baptism is a symbol of death and rebirth, and the wish for return to the mother. The regressive tendency which we have seen plays so great a part in religion is evident even in the language of certain passages in the Bible. "Ye must be born again." "How can a man be born when he is old; Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born? Except one be born of water and the spirit he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God."

In the sense that baptism is a symbol of the wish for a new birth, the ceremony would not at first seem to have much in common with the compulsive acts of neurotics. Yet it must be said that this wish is unconsciously associated with the wish to remove the taint of sin or "impurity." Baptism is not only, therefore, the symbol of rebirth, it is a form of *ceremonial washing,* as well as a symbol of rebirth—drawn *from the water.* The word comes from

the Greek *bapto,* which means to wash, Baptizo, —to dip repeatedly. This is a very common religious practice. Asiatic religious pilgrims travel many miles in order to bathe in the waters of the sacred river. The ceremony of sprinkling is common to both the Hebrew and Christian religions. Sometimes it is said that among the ancients such washing ceremonies had the utilitarian aim of personal cleanliness and sanitation. Such an explanation shows a misunderstanding of the psychology of the religious interest.

Baptism was never more of a sanitary measure than is the present use of holy water in the Catholic church. There is an apparent exception to this in the treatment of leprosy. But many other things were "unclean" and the removal of the taint of them was a purely ceremonial act. Ceremonial washing is like "sympathetic magic." Its aim is originally to remove the curse which results from violating a taboo, touching a ceremonially "unclean" object.

"The soul that toucheth any such (thing) shall be unclean until even, and shall not eat of the holy things unless he bathe his flesh in water." . . . "But the man that shall be un-

clean and shall not purify himself, that soul shall be cut off from the midst of the assembly because he hath defiled the sanctuary of Jehovah: the water for impurity hath not been sprinkled upon him: he is unclean. And it shall be a perpetual statute unto them; and he that sprinkleth the water for impurity shall wash his clothes and he that toucheth the water for impurity shall be unclean until even. And whatsoever the unclean person toucheth shall be unclean; and the soul that toucheth shall be unclean until even."

Here in the Old Testament we have a piece of reasoning which is characteristic of many primitive peoples in their attitude toward the taboo. Frazer says that the taboo is negative magic. He adds:

> Thus in primitive society the rules of ceremonial purity observed by divine kings, chiefs, and priests agree in many respects with the rules observed by homicides, mourners, women in childbed, girls at puberty, hunters and fishermen, and so on. To us these various classes of persons appear to differ totally in character and condition; some of them we should call

> holy, others we might pronounce unclean and polluted. But the savage makes no such moral distinction between them; the conceptions of holiness and pollution are not yet differentiated in his mind. To him the common feature of all these persons is that they are dangerous and in danger, and the danger in which they stand and to which they expose others is what we should call spiritual or ghostly, and therefore imaginary; imagination acts upon man as really as does gravitation, and may kill him as certainly as a dose of prussic acid. To seclude these persons from the rest of the world so that the dreaded spiritual danger shall neither reach them nor spread from them is the object of the taboos which they have to observe. These taboos act, so to say, as electric insulators to preserve the spiritual force with which these persons are charged from suffering or inflicting harm by contact with the outer world.[1]

Freud calls this magic, the "omnipotence of thought." He says in *Totem and Taboo:*

[1] Frazer, *The Golden Bough,* p. 223.

The possibility of a contagious magic which depends upon contiguous association will then show us that the psychic valuation of the wish and the will has been extended to all psychic acts which the will can command. . . . Objects as such are overshadowed by the ideas representing them; what takes place in the latter must also happen to the former, and the relations which exist between ideas are also postulated as to things. As thought does not recognize distances and easily brings together in one act of consciousness things spatially and temporally far removed, the magic world also puts itself above spatial distance by telepathy, and treats a past association as if it were a present one. In the animistic age the reflection of the inner world must obscure that other picture of the world which we believe we recognize. . . . All compulsion neurotics are superstitious in this manner and often against their better judgment. The existence of omnipotence of thought is most clearly seen in compulsion neurosis, where the results of this primitive method of thought

are most often found or met in consciousness. . . .

In every one of the neuroses it is not the reality of the experience but the reality of the thought which forms the basis for the symptom formation. Neurotics live in a special world in which, as I have elsewhere expressed it, only the "neurotic standard of currency counts"—that is to say, only things intensively thought of or affectively conceived are effective with them regardless of whether these things are in harmony with outer reality. . . .

The neurotic's guilty conscience is just as incomprehensible if traced to real misdeeds.

A compulsion neurotic may be oppressed by a sense of guilt which is appropriate to a wholesale murder, while at the same time he acts towards his fellow beings in a most considerate and scrupulous manner, a behavior which he evinced since his childhood. . . . *The protective formulas of the compulsion neurosis also have a counterpart in the incantations of magic.* But the evolution of compulsive actions

> may be described by pointing out how these actions begin as a spell against evil wishes which are very remote from anything sexual, only to end up as *a substitute for forbidden sexual activity which they imitate as faithfully as possible.*[1]

Thus ceremonial washing has its historic origin in the taboo and is a form of magic which removes the taint from the person who is defiled by touching the "unclean," forbidden object, and back of the taboo Freud finds the repressed wish. Certain objects are taboo because they are associated with a wish which is forbidden by consciousness. Ceremonial washing is at bottom an attempt to remove the guilt which is associated with the unconscious wish, often of an incestuous or infantile, autoerotic or perverse nature. The taboos and ceremonies of purification which commonly appear as symptoms of compulsion neuroses clearly indicate the true psychological nature of such practices.

Hence washing may cleanse from sin. "If he be not washed, he shall bear his iniquity." "Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes." The

[1] Freud, *Totem and Taboo,* pp. 140, 141, 143, 144, 145.

Psalmist writes, "I will wash my hands in innocency." And again, "Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions and my sin is ever before me. Against thee, thee only have I sinned, and done that which is evil in thy sight. . . . Behold, thou desireth truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom. Purify me with hyssop and I shall be clean: wash me and I shall be whiter than snow."

The text of the psalm just quoted bears an editorial introductory note to the effect that this is "a psalm of David written when Nathan the prophet came unto him after he had gone in unto Bath-sheba." Much biblical scholarship finds this note to be unhistorical. The sin here is *secret* and of *the hidden part.* Psychopathologists find that a like sense of guilt together with ceremonial washing, is common among neurotics, whose sense of "impurity" is often determined by sexual practices of a secret and often autoerotic nature.

Many neurotics thus suffer from compulsive hand washing, a phenomenon which obviously is a form of ceremonial cleansing. Freud says, "All compulsive patients tend to repeat, to

isolate their actions from others and to subject them to a rhythmic sequence; most of them wash too much."

In showing the likeness between the ceremonial washing of religion and that of the compulsion neuroses, I do not mean to say that religious people are neurotics. It would seem rather than certain practices become the symptoms of the neurosis, precisely because they are also disguised expressions of certain unconscious impulses of most people. Neurotics frequently behave in ways that were once common religious practices. One watching them almost gets the impression that certain symbols, phobias, ceremonies, and taboos must be inherited racial traits. In fact, this is the conclusion reached by a number of psychopathologists. Rivers, in *Instinct and the Unconscious,* holds that there may be instances in the neurosis of regression to primitive racial habits. Jung seems to think that certain neurotic symptoms are fragments of a common race memory, and Freud says that the symptoms of the neurosis may be divided into two kinds, those which are individual and "obviously dependent upon the experience of the patient, and those which are typical." He says that "there is a possibility

that the typical symptoms revert to an experience that is itself typical and common to all humanity." Such actions, he says, are like certain dreams which all people doubtless have, dreams of falling, of flying, floating, of being hemmed in, of being naked, etc. In all such typical phenomena "we see a fundamental groundwork enriched by individual additions."

It is not necessary to hold with Jung that the ceremonials of the neurotic and those of religion are similar because of the existence of memories in a common racial unconscious. Such an assumption would seem to imply that there is an inheritance of acquired characters. Freud's view is more scientific. The likeness of the symptoms is due to the fact that *the neurotic only shows in exaggerated form traits which exist in the nature of us all.*

That which is common to religion and the neurosis is the struggle for "purification." In both cases the conflict results in the stereotyping of behavior. Ceremonial acts are performed which are strikingly like the magic of primitive people and are the outgrowth of a kind of reasoning process which is both infantile and primitive. When reasoning is dominated by wishing, the causal connections among

objects are ignored and things are associated because of their similarity or contiguity in experience. Thus *magic* is an attempt to influence the course of events by imitating the process of nature. The associations among objects which exist in the mind of the daydreamer are assumed to exist also in the real world, and are substituted for the causal connection between phenomena. Thus Frazer tells us:

> The Indians of British Columbia live largely upon the fish which abound in their seas and rivers. If the fish do not come in due season, and the Indians are hungry, a Nootka wizard will make an image of a swimming fish and put it into the water in the direction from which the fish generally appear. This ceremony, accompanied by a prayer to the fish to come, will cause them to arrive at once. . . . The western tribes of British New Guinea employ a charm to aid the hunter in spearing dugong or turtle. A small beetle, which haunts cocoanut trees, is placed in the hole of the spear-haft into which the spear-head fits. This is supposed to make the spear-head stick fast in the dugong or

turtle, just as the beetle sticks fast to a man's skin when it bites him. When a Cambodian hunter has set his nets and taken nothing, he strips himself naked, goes some way off, then strolls up to the net as if he did not see it, lets himself be caught in it and cries: "Hello! What's this? I'm afraid I'm caught." And after that the net is sure to catch game. . . .

Malays engaged in the search for camphor eat their food dry and take care not to pound their salt fine. The reason is that the camphor occurs in the form of small grains deposited in the cracks of the trunk of the camphor tree. Accordingly, it seems plain to the Malay that if, while seeking for camphor, he were to eat his salt finely ground, the camphor would be found also in fine grains; whereas, by eating his salt coarse he ensures that the grains of the camphor will also be large. . . . For a similar reason it is a rule with the Toradjas of Central Celebes that no one may stand or loiter on the ladder of a house where there is a pregnant woman, for such delay would retard the birth of the child. . . .

Among some of the Dyaks of Borneo, when a woman is in hard labour, a wizard is called in, who essays to facilitate the delivery in a rational manner by manipulating the body of the sufferer. Meantime another wizard outside the room exerts himself to attain the same end by means which we should regard as wholly irrational. He, in fact, pretends to be the expectant mother; a large stone attached to his stomach by a cloth wrapt round his body represents the child in the womb, and, following the directions shouted to him by his colleague on the real scene of operations, he moves this make-believe baby about on his body in exact imitation of the movements of the real baby till the infant is born. The same principle of make-believe, so dear to children, has led other peoples to employ a simulation of birth as a form of adoption, and even as a mode of restoring a supposed dead person to life. . . .

In ancient Greece any man who had been supposed erroneously to be dead, and for whom in his absence funeral rites had been performed, was treated as dead to

> society till he had gone through the form of being born again. He was passed through a woman's lap, then washed, dressed in swaddling-clothes, and put out to nurse. Not until this ceremony had been punctually performed might he mix freely with living folk. In ancient India, under similar circumstances, the supposed dead man had to pass the first night after his return in a tub filled with a mixture of fat and water; there he sat with doubled-up fists and without uttering a syllable, like a child in the womb, while over him were performed all the sacraments that were wont to be celebrated over a pregnant woman.[1]

As an example of similar logic Freud, in *Totem and Taboo,* tells us of a woman suffering with compulsion neurosis, who begged her husband not to take his razors to be sharpened at a shop which happened to be near a place where coffins were made. In this case, Freud says that the compulsive reasoning and behavior were really the wife's defense against a morbid wish that her husband would kill himself. In the case given by Brill also, there

[1] Frazer, *The Golden Bough,* pp. 18, 21, 14, 15.

was a wish, and the behavior of the patient was an elaborate mechanism the function of which was to *defend the subject against her own impulses.*

So the Hebrews held that sprinkling water upon the person who touched a tabooed object would take away his "uncleanness." The Psalmist wishes to be washed so that his secret sin may be removed, just as Lady Macbeth tries to wash the blood stain off her hands. The priest at Damascus says to Saul of Tarsus to "arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins." St. Paul tells the Christians at Corinth that, whereas many of them were vile sinners, they are now washed, sanctified, justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The calling upon the name of Christ in the ceremony of baptism is interesting. There are many forms of magic in which the *repetition of certain words is part of the charm.* In the book of Acts there is an incident which is illustrative. St. Paul goes to Ephesus and finds there certain disciples who had been baptized according to John's formula, but though they "believed," their baptism appeared to be insufficient. Therefore St. Paul baptized them again "in the name of the Lord Jesus," after

which he laid his hands upon them and they "spoke with tongues and prophesied."

I have discussed ceremonial washing at some length only because it is typical. We should find that many other religious practices have their analogy both in primitive magic and in the ceremonialism of neurotics: the laying on of hands, genuflection, making the sign of the cross, holding lighted candles, eating bread and drinking wine as symbols of the body and blood of the Incarnate Deity, a ceremony which by the way Frazer shows is very wide-spread among primitive peoples, and is much older than Christianity.

I wish especially to point out the motive of purification which is expressed in many of these ceremonial customs. This motive is not only that which impels the neurotic to perform his ceremonial acts; it is of a piece with all that I said in the chapter on sin and redemption. The sacrament, the ceremony, the ritual of worship, the taboo-ethic, are all *means of grace.* They are the elaborations of that same inner conflict which, differently rationalized, appears as the feeling of alienation from the Father and longing for reconciliation.

In the effort to defend himself against his

inner feeling of guilt, the neurotic resorts to ritualistic forms of behavior which are compromises between his unconscious impulses and his inhibitions. He also surrounds himself with a system of taboos. His struggle for "purity" leads to that *over-scrupulousness* which is common among certain neurotics, and also appears in religious behavior. Adler says that in the neurosis, honorableness and conscientiousness border on pedantry. As Dr. J. T. McCurdy well says, the neurotic individual may become very much afraid that he will do some one an injury, or that he may be accused of dishonesty. Again he may be extremely prudish, and his ritualism may be elaborated in order to secure him from the danger of contamination. In all such cases his ceremonialism has the function of keeping him on his guard, of isolating him, of undoing in advance the evil consequences of the thing he wishes to do; that from which he shrinks is, in fact, the very thing which constantly occupies him.

One often sees this type of behavior among religious people, particularly among the evangelical middle class. There is, for instance, a hypersensitiveness regarding the subject of sex and an almost ritualistic disguising of interest

in it. Also a sedulous avoidance of "indecency." In the Middle Ages there was evidently less of this prudishness among ordinary religious people than there is to-day. In the course of daily association with religious persons, one finds many illustrations of a negative fixation upon the erotic motive. A typical illustration of this occurred in a conversation which I recently had with a man who spent an evening telling me his religious beliefs and how religion was the basis of morality. I asked him if he would object to giving me his associations with a certain list of words. One of these words was the word "naked." He took a long time to answer, was embarrassed, and finally said, "Indecent." When asked for further associations, he said, "Well, I never saw so much as my mother's knee in my life." He was "disgusted" at the sort of gowns which women wear at formal dinners and in ballrooms, and wished that his wife were more "modest." He said that to see women wearing short skirts and bobbed hair, exposing their arms and shoulders, or smoking cigarettes, made him angry, because such things always made him "think of prostitutes."

One day I was walking along the west bank

of the Hudson River some miles above New York City, when two young men about four hundred yards away took off their clothes and plunged into the water. The man who was walking beside me, said: "That's rotten. Those fellows ought to be arrested." I said, "Why do you think so?" He answered, "Naked bodies are disgusting." When I asked him if he felt the same way about works of sculptural art, he said that he did to some extent, but, anyway, he thought that a human foot was "just about the most loathsome object imaginable."

We will leave to the psychoanalysts the explanation of the unconscious "complexes" which cause this attitude of mind. My point is that such over-sensitiveness plays a large part in much religious morality, and gives rise to much of the compulsive thinking and behavior which is popularly characterized as "Puritanism."

During much of the time that the National Board of Review of Motion Pictures was affiliated with the People's Institute of New York it fell to my lot to be the chairman of the Board and thus I had occasion to study many instances of this over-scrupulousness in

the various demands which came in for more rigid censorship. One picture was returned for a second review because it contained a picture of the interior of a lingerie shop in which a prospective purchaser held up to view a woman's undergarment. Another picture met with objection because it showed a room in which there was a small cast of the Venus de Medici standing on a pedestal. These are typical of hundreds of protests which came in from all over the country and most frequently came from religious groups.

Such conscientiousness often extends beyond the behavior of the individual himself and becomes a sort of morbid curiosity about the conduct and even the thoughts of one's neighbors. Those who are themselves suffering with an inner craving or morbid erotic fixation cannot bear the thought that any one else may be so tempted. To purge themselves, they must make the universe prophylactic. Everyone must be guarded by an elaborate system of taboos against the possibility of temptation. Societies are formed and legislation enacted with the purpose of searching through our literature and art with only one interest in mind, namely, to discover something "ob-

scene" and suppress it. The preoccupation with vice and obscenity and eroticism which thus leads to the elaboration of censorships and prohibitions—all designed to "purify" society—is strikingly like that which compels the neurotic to scrupulous performance of his individual taboo ritual. We shall have more to say later about religious morality. Here I wish to point out the fact that *the morality of religion is essentially ritualistic and ceremonial.* It is not a realistic adaptation of means to ends. Neither is it primarily a philosophical attempt to value the ends themselves. In religion the ends are given; they are divine commandments and are above criticism. Behavior is *required,* and required by something outside the situation with respect to which it is performed.

The preoccupation with the struggle for purification is a deeply religious phenomenon, although this phenomenon also appears in the behavior of certain neurotics. A self-imposed "discipline" or ceremonial behavior is also, properly speaking, a means of grace. But the attempt to force this discipline upon all people through coercive means and by legislation is a form of *crowd behavior* which religious groups

share with other crowds. In this case religion is transformed into a sort of vulgar weapon. The unctions and sanctities of religion are made use of by the crowd in order to disarm criticism of the religious crowd's will to power and render its intended victims helpless by making it appear that resistance to the crowd is resistance to God and his commandments.

Every crowd bent upon conquest professes that it is very moral, and is interested only in vindicating the right. And religious crowds likewise use their morality for propaganda and for self-justification. It is thus often said that religion is the basis of morality. It is not. *Morality is the outgrowth of the unescapable facts of human relationships.* We simply have to adjust our behavior to that of our fellows. Religion is in a very real sense "above morality." It is an escape from many of the realities with which morality has to deal. Popular morality is often preached in the name of religion because the church, being a powerful social organization, is useful to the established order of society. Many moderns believe that the ethic of Christianity is its great *raison d'être.* They are therefore sympathetic to it even though they do not accept its theology. Why,

of course, that is precisely why the ethical teaching is there! Nothing causes men to be so sympathetic to a movement as its "good moral influence."

Many religious writers would give the impression that the virtues of chastity, honesty, brotherly love, and self-control were first discovered by the founders of their faith, and that except for this fact such virtues would never have been known. The truth is that every religious system *borrows*, and takes credit to itself for, the current moral convention of the community of its origin. Early Christianity gave a new moral impulse to life. It placed a new emphasis upon the moral values which were current among the best minds of that time. But its elemental moral teaching comes from sources which are much older than the New Testament. The Romans of the time of Cicero and Seneca were great moralists, though most of them did not practice the virtues which they professed much better than do modern Christians. Christianity is not, let me repeat, a system of ethics, it is a scheme of redemption—something quite different.

I said that the tendency of the religious

group to impose its own values and stereotyped forms of behavior upon all people is not necessarily religious. As a matter of fact, it is anti-religious in the strict sense of the term. It is the sort of thing that every crowd does. In the Middle Ages, it was in matters of doctrinal rather than moral rationalization that the religious group sought crowd-wise to coerce men into conformity. The change of emphasis from theology to popular moral convention in our day is doubtless a phase of democracy.

In a democratic age, intellectual distinction among men is undervalued, since such distinction is not flattering to the many. Hence intellectual differences become relatively unimportant. But differences in the matter of conformity to moral convention are overrated. When mere moral conformity is the standard, the mediocre may be as good as the best. Superiority among men is no longer congenital, it is an "acquired" character. Hence one "goes in" for morality as a protest against the feeling of inferiority. The masses, as Nietzsche said, can therefore be led around by the nose in the name of morality. They are very susceptible to a propaganda which is expressed in moral terms.

Hence preaching an excessive morality, a

crowd may easily work its will upon the community as a whole. Churches, therefore, take up moral reform to just the extent that interest in their theological subtleties declines. Men look to the church as the custodian and champion of social morality in the degree that "the gospel" is displaced by popular moral values, conformity to which gives the mass a feeling of superiority. Ritual ceremony and moral convention then become standardized in the religious group, and in this respect it is like other crowds.

Every crowd movement tends to develop its peculiar jargon, its ritual, its dogma and cult ideas and practices. Its members tend to express their faith in almost identical words and gestures and voice tones. Thus there is a "pulpit manner" and a soap-box manner, both equally stereotyped forms of behavior. One does not read the Book of Common Prayer in the same tones that he reads Shakespeare. If one preached a sermon using the same gestures and intonations that one uses in teaching a class in psychology, people would think him irreligious, regardless of the orthodoxy of his message. In the same way, there is only one socialist speech, one address on single tax, one

plea for prohibition. I believe an observer could watch across Union Square a man addressing a street-corner audience, be so far from him that he could not hear a word that he said, and yet tell by his voice, tones, and gestures whether he was speaking for the Salvation Army, socialism, the freedom of Ireland, or some patriotic society.

Man is prone to rigmarole; it is a labor-saving device, a substitute for original thinking. It gives one the illusion of security and the appearance of soundness. When men with such a tendency are also religious, there is added to the ceremonialism of the latter a rigidity and compulsive quality which is overmastering. The habits once formed in the religious group become fixed. They are ends in themselves. They survive through long ages unchanged. New situations may arise, new worlds may be discovered, new truths may cause the old habits to become utterly irrelevant; with the passing of time, old issues recede and life demands of men new modes of response, but the old behavior patterns live on. The very language in which the service is conducted may be long dead, the whole ceremonialism be reminiscent of a bygone age, men may even have forgotten

the meaning of the words they repeat or the forms which they practice, and yet, as Sabatier said, "Man is incurably religious."

The statement was made above that the *morality of religion is ritualistic.* I wish to show the significance of this fact for the ethic of Christianity. In primitive groups it would seem that there is no conscious distinction between ceremonial behavior and morals. The words "morals" and "ethics" really mean *"customs."* In an earlier chapter I said that morality is essentially adaptive behavior, and grows out of the need of mutual adjustment. But I also said that it need not originally have been consciously and deliberately so. Folk ways or mores may begin in all sorts of ways; it makes no difference how, so long as there are definite habits which serve to give the social environment some degree of regularity. In the end, those groups which possess the habits which are most effective in relating the members to one another and to their world survive; the others are killed off or pushed aside in the struggle for existence. Hence morals are subject to the law of natural selection, and it is the selective process which in the end gives moral behavior its utilitarian signifi-

cance. Forms of behavior may thus be at the same time adaptive and ceremonial. In the primitive group we see this dual content in most of the habits which have to do with domestic relations, hunting, fighting and industry, all of which are shot through with ritual, taboo, and magic. Thus one is subjected to the incest taboo, to various forms of totemism; war is a religious act; everything the hunter does is characterized by magic.

Professor James Harvey Robinson gives us an account of the primitive method of making fire. Some one who is more clever than his fellows discovers that fire may be made by rubbing two sticks together. The first time this was done, there was no thought of making fire. As the fire maker works, he sings or repeats certain words, and he and his fellows thereafter believe that it was these magic words which caused the fire to appear.

Hence there is a ceremonially correct way to make fire, to build a house, to plant a field, to kill and eat an animal, and except one does things in this proper manner and with appropriate ceremonies, he must not do them. The fire, for instance, would be "strange fire," and we know from the Bible what happened to the

Hebrew priests who were so neglectful as to make strange fire in the presence of Jehovah. Robinson says that many arts have been lost, not because men forgot how to perform them, but because they forgot the magic words which accompanied the process.

In time a special class of men arose whose function was to remember these magic formulas. Thus, as Veblen shows, there came to be two kinds of wisdom—that which consisted in knowing the magic formulas and that which was merely a knowledge of the manual processes necessary to do things. The former was "higher"; the latter might be possessed by slaves and women. Thus a strabismus resulted. The magical ceremony because in it the wish is expressed that causal connections yield to man's desires becomes associated with the religious interest. Knowledge of the manipulations performed in the actual labor processes becomes "practical" wisdom and is the "secular."

Of course morality really belongs to the secular or practical interest, for right conduct is nothing else than doing things in the way which gets desirable results. Morality is as truly present in sawing wood or hoeing potatoes as in marrying a wife or loving one's

neighbors, although the results of these latter may be more important or interesting to one's neighbors.

Now when, as we have seen, the religious group becomes a crowd movement, it, like other crowds, appropriates much of the current popular mores, steals its thunder, as it were. It thus provides itself with certain *mechanisms of justification* and possesses a weapon with which unbelievers and worldlings may be overpowered in the name of morality. The religious group lays special emphasis upon those moral values which are most akin to the religious or neurotic struggle for "self-purification" and tends to carry them to greater lengths than is the case with the more easy-going average person. "Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the scribes and pharisees ye shall in no wise enter into the Kingdom of Heaven."

A religious group, like the antinomians of Calvin's day, or the Mormons of a generation ago, which breaks with existing popular moral convention, is made to suffer. Even early Jewish Christianity seems to have suffered for this reason to some extent. It was nonconformist in such matters as the Sabbath, circumcision,

blood revenge, although the disciples took pains to surpass their neighbors in other respects. Thus we see that the religious group takes over certain moral conventions, modifies them by associating them with its own ceremonialism, and reissues them on its own authority in the form of divine commandments. The forms of behavior now required by religion no longer appear to be inherent in the situations which men have to deal with. They are prescribed categorically, must be obeyed as ends in themselves regardless of results in experience, and their performance becomes ritualistic. Thus the religious group again dissolves the dualism between magic formula and manipulation, only now it is certain actions which are ceremonially religious. The rest are secular activities toward which religion may be indifferent.

The religious group insists so strenuously upon the performance of these acts of ceremonial morality that one gains the impression that the religious system is primarily a moral endeavor. One forgets that the keeping of the commandments is for the sake of purification and for setting up harmonious relations with the Deity and is not inspired by such practical

consideration as the truly moral desire to deal adequately with environmental situations. To be sure, one often sees a practical motive back of efforts to induce the masses to live more strictly in conformity with the commandments of the religion which they profess. Thus a former President of the United States tells his fellow citizens that it is only by means of a return to religion that civilization may be saved. But Mr. Wilson is writing as a statesman. His real concern is political rather than religious. He would make use of religion as a means for preserving the social order. A worthy end, indeed, but one that is irrelevant so far as the religious interest itself is concerned. The state naturally seeks to seize religious conventions and use them for its own ends. It has often done so. But such ends are not in themselves religious.

We have seen that religion is rather a mechanism of *escape* from this world. "Be ye in the world, but not of it." "Behold I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves." . . . "If the world hateth you, ye know that it hath hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love its own: but ye are not of the world." "The world

passeth away and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever." One can hardly imagine a Jesus, a St. John or St. Francis bidding men practice the virtues of their religion in order that there may be industrial prosperity and political security!

The fact that the religious group appropriates the moral precepts of the community in which it originates accounts for the existence in the Christian system of *more than one moral philosophy*. The Christian ethic is a blend of various ethical ideals each of which corresponds to a certain type of man. There is first a survival in Christianity of a lofty and beautiful *"aristocratic"* ethic. I do not mean that we have in Christianity a duplicate of Aristotle's good man, nor is there emphasis upon the classic virtues of wisdom, courage, temperance, and justice. The Christian ideal is more in the minor key; more passive and aloof. The emphasis is upon the "softer" virtues, poverty, chastity, obedience, humility. But here, too, we are to a certain extent moving in the realm of aristocratic ideals. We are contemplating a cultural ideal. We are not given rules, but a spirit. All emphasis upon the inwardness and autonomy and uniqueness of the moral life sig-

nifies an ideal of personal independence and triumph over situations. Here as with the more masculine classic virtues there is self-mastery—something far removed from plebeianism. In this sense Christianity has something in common with Plato and the Stoics. There is a fineness of detachment, a suggestion of a spirit which feels that the world is too much with it, one capable of quiet meditation, self-assurance, magnanimity. This is indicated in those passages which enjoin one to forgive his enemies, refrain from either resisting evil or casting his pearls before swine. One sees life from above, is a free spirit, has outgrown law and convention, and, as Havelock Ellis would say, has learned to make of living an art. It is only the man who has bigness of mind and a cultural tradition, a man who is trained in dealing magnanimously with his social inferiors, who can psychologically afford to strive to be perfect in the way that the Father in heaven is perfect, who . . . "maketh his sun to rise on the evil and the good and sendeth his rain on the just and the unjust."

Second, there is in the Christian system a strong mixture of *ascetic* morality which is

doubtless of Central Asiatic origin. According to this ethic, the aim is not so much to make of living an art, as it is to escape contamination. Spirit and flesh are thought of as deadly enemies. One strives to mortify the flesh, to present his body a living sacrifice, to die unto this world, to purge his members of native evil. The ascetic ideal often appears in religion as in the neurosis because both are motivated by a similar desire for escape from the feeling of sin. For the same reason, it has much in common with the neurotic's self-imposed taboos.

It makes strong appeal to the imagination of the masses, because in it the restraints which men in society necessarily have to place on one another, and thus upon their own passions, are what men call "being good." Hence he who practices such restraints more than is necessary is "saintly." The ascetic is "good" in the same way that the mass strives to be good, only much more so. His goodness is therefore representative and thus his life of self-denial is vicarious; it is a symbol of the solution of the popular moral dilemma. That the very reverse of asceticism is also a popular ideal need not

astonish us. Man has an ambivalent attitude towards his morality.

A third element in the Christian ethic is distinctly *plebeian* and reflects the ideals of the proletariat of the ancient Roman Empire. There is here a tendency to social revolution. There is "class consciousness." "Blessed are ye poor," "Woe unto you who are rich." The early Christians called themselves the *"Ebionim"*—the Poor. The sufferings of the poor are emphasized just as they are in radical propaganda to-day, and it is believed that the Messiah will soon return and bless those who have served these "little ones," have fed the hungry, clothed the naked, healed the sick, and visited those in prison. Those who do not do these things are to depart into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels. We have the story of Lazarus and Dives as an illustration of this attitude. Also the spirit of revenge against those who enjoy the good things of earth appears often. "Woe unto you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites." "Weep and howl, ye rich, for the miseries which are about to come on you." The reader will also remember in this connection the dreadful imagery of the book of Revelation.

The wretched and those haunted by a feeling of inferiority thus take *imaginary revenge* upon a world in which they are made to suffer. The "superiority" of the great is denied. They are really enemies of God. The necessities and weaknesses of the "little ones" are virtues. Meekness, patience, endurance of poverty and insult, these are not the inevitable lot of the victims of ancient civilization; no, they are borne voluntarily, and the practice of these virtues is demanded of all. If the rich young man is to enter heaven, he must sell his goods and give unto the poor. Ananias, who withholds some of his property while appearing to enter fully into the communism practiced by the early Christians, is miraculously struck dead.

Thus those who were crushed by ancient civilization and were in revolt against it, could picture their revolt as *devotion to God* and to righteousness. They thus gained a powerful weapon and could at the same time say with all humility, "We are the good."

Nietzsche, who held that this spirit was the dominant element in the New Testament regarded Christianity as essentially a "slave morality." It is hard to say just which is

the dominant note in the Christian ethic. One age selects the Christian gentleman, another the ascetic, and a third the spirit of social revolt. Nietzsche might have given more attention to the aristocratic element in the New Testament ethic if he had not over-emphasized the aggressive factors in "master morality." This idea that the master class is chiefly occupied with eating up and exploiting its victims, the poor, is a plebeian idea, even though Nietzsche in emphasizing it feels that he is making a plea for aristocracy in denouncing Christianity.

As we shall see later, this "slave morality" does play a part in the history of Christendom, and it is significant that it is brought out as a rationalization and justification for the spirit of social revolution again and again. In a sense it is the prototype of all subsequent revolutionary propaganda and always it appears as a fiction the function of which is to justify the wholesale revenge of the "exploited, the imaginary slaughter of the enemies of the meek.

In popular Christianity these three elements are strangely confused. The ideal of the Christian gentleman is preserved and many

seek to identify themselves with him. There is forgiveness of enemies, for instance, but with the vulgar there is also compensation for such generosity. God will remember and settle with the offender, for, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord." The Christian sufferer may by his nonresistant attitude "heap coals of fire" on the heads of his tormentors, a figure of speech in which the imagery is not wholly free from the idea of inflicting a measure of retaliation. The ascetic ideal of course prevails. Among Catholics it is the special work of grace of the few. Among Protestants it often becomes a species of vulgarized Puritanism, in which interest, though unconsciously and in a negative form, is too much centered upon sexuality and the obscene.

Popular Christianity thus merges these various moral ideals and is unaware of their incompatibility. It mingles them all in a ceremonial ethic which has survival value for the Christian community as a *struggle group*. And interestingly enough, quite in conformity with what the psychologist should expect to find, it is the negative, the prohibitive aspects of these confused moral ideals which popular Chris-

tianity emphasizes. The ethical ideals of Christian crowds, like all others, consist largely of justification propaganda added to the primitive taboo. Thus when churches organize themselves to bring about popular reform movements, their aim is *always a prohibition, a censorship, a further restraint* of some kind.

It is an interesting fact and quite in keeping with all that I have said, that the crowd always acclaims the moralist who tells men that something which they have been doing is wrong in the light of an abstract principle which they all profess. They are always scandalized if a moral philosopher tells them that something which they have prohibited is right. And this is because the crowd in its will to rule naturally lays emphasis upon the restrictive mechanisms of social control, while at the same time the crowd thinking is unconsciously a device for escaping from that very control.

Thus in the degree that the Christian group becomes crowd-minded its ethic retains the primitive taboo. We have discussed the taboos of neurotics, and have found that they are devices for security and imaginary self-purification. The same is true of the crowd. All crowds are "moral," and their morality is

always a taboo. He who violates this taboo is a candidate for destruction, and he who aids or defends the tabooed person becomes himself taboo. Thus the French Assembly decapitated not only Louis XVI, but the lawyer it appointed to defend him. The mob in Omaha, who were determined to lynch certain negroes, attacked the mayor who tried to dissuade them. A political agitator in the West in a fiery address said, "Damn the Republican party, and damn anyone who won't damn it."

Thus in the degree that Christianity is a popular movement, we should expect to see its ethic take the form of the taboo. The Old Testament morality already shows this quality. Adam and Eve are expelled from Eden because they have violated the prohibition regarding the "forbidden fruit." The taboo is a prohibition, says Wundt, against touching certain objects. Freud also emphasizes this fact and says that the taboo is a compulsive prohibition the nucleus of which is the *act of touching*. The prohibition, he says, owes its compulsive character to its association with its unknown, hidden, *inhibited pleasure*. Both Freud and Jung hold that touching with the hands has in this connection a repressed erotic significance.

The taboo is thus a negation of a wicked wish; —it is negative goodness.

Whether or not this is always the case, it is interesting to note that even in the Decalogue, most of the ten Commandments contain the words "thou shalt not." Touching in the Hebrew Bible is commonly associated with "uncleanness." The Christian ethic taken as a whole also shows this negative quality; one must keep himself "unspotted from the world." The world is evil; it must be renounced. The same negative point of view appears in the attitude toward property, toward sex, toward wordly ambition. "Purity" consists in the avoidance of contamination. Thus moral reform is always with the churches a new type of *prohibition.*

An ethic which is thus predominantly negative and inhibitive has much in common with the taboo, and the compulsive nature of such behavior is noticeable in the fact that moral precepts of this nature are also "commandments." *A morality which is based upon commandments and seeks its Good outside the causal connections between behavior and its results in experience necessarily retains an element that is of infantile origin.*

It is the presence of this element also which leads ever to the prohibition against the pleasure of touching. Thus the ritual of religion and its ethic are reducible to the same thing; they make up a ceremonialism the function of which is self-purification, rather than the mastery over the course of events. Religious behavior, like religious thought, is a mechanism of redemption from the feeling of sin. Its aim is to guard the personality picture or fiction about the self against the feeling of inferiority.

> For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit.

The people to whom this passage was addressed must have gained through the moral enthusiasm and sense of release it brought them a finer experience of mutual adjustment, even though the primary aim—perhaps indirectly because of it—is the solution of conflicts which lie wholly within the psyche.

## VIII

### *Are We Facing a Revival of Religion?*

THROUGHOUT this study we have dealt with religion from the natural-history point of view. Whatever else our subject may include, it is a process by which men orient themselves to their world. If the reader could be here to-day, perhaps the task of adjusting oneself to the world would appear to be more simple and natural than it really is. It is a late August afternoon, in Nantucket. A summer breeze gently lifts the hangings of my study windows. Outside, this quiet, sun-saturated hour is an end in itself. I look northward toward the silent, white Great Point lighthouse across the narrow strip of moorland which separates Nantucket Harbor from the ocean. The sky is high and cloudless, and the blue harbor beneath stretches itself in warm comfort, lazily, in fullness of self-enjoyment, as if the slightest ripple might break the charm of this moment. Over at the right, where the ocean meets the sky, a solitary schooner

with white sails loafs on its outbound journey—who cares whither. In the distance a wild bird calls. Only that and the heavy rhythm of the surf falling on the sand just outside this little cottage break the silence. Everything is happening here, yet nothing. It is the culminating hour of the year, an hour of completeness. This afternoon needs no future to lean upon or give it a right to be. If the world ceased to-day, this would be its meaning.

Why cannot the life of man be like this? Why must we invent fictions in order to live, in order to find the meaning and value of our world? Why are we different from those flowers which fill this summer day with their own fragrance and color, or those waves which fall upon the shore, breaking and receding and content with their inevitability? We, too, are but waves in the great ocean of existence. Is anything really lost when at last we have spent our momentary energy and have returned to the great sea which threw us out? Yet we are loath to return to the unfathomable. We would forever keep our sea foam and our rustling noise as we creep over the beach sand. Is our individuality more significant than that which separates these

breakers from the ocean from which they came? Perhaps! We, at least, of all natural phenomena, are unwilling to lose our identity. We regard our return as tragedy, and that which holds back our flowing as evil.

Yet we bring much of our evil with us. Manhattan was once such an island as Nantucket. If the sweltering millions who to-day run about the great city were to come here, they would spoil it all. Man spoils his world because it spoils him. To-morrow morning's paper will be filled with stories of accident, murder, suicide, and political chicanery. Other things in nature are complete; they are what they are; we are not. We must find the meaning and value of our lives in fiction and illusion. We must find escape and compensation where other living things are content with reality. Reality for us is but half hospitable. Over it we have woven the web of civilization and set the ends of self-consciousness, and between that which man has achieved—and necessarily so—and that which he is by nature, compromise must be made. There is no return to nature for us. The meaning of life for us is no longer to be realized in the mere fact of living. We must create it.

Religion is an effort to give to living a meaning. Its symbols and ceremonies are compromises between the self-sufficient mystery of life and what civilization requires of us all. Perhaps in this way we bring back something of that sense of harmony with all things which other living creatures possess as part of their very existence. The method by which this harmony is achieved is less important than the fact that it is achieved at all. In a real sense this *return* is a realization of a great truth. The very sense of self-importance which the mechanisms of religion seek to preserve, the "salvation of the soul," may be but an appreciation of an elemental fact of existence. Over this fact man has superimposed a crust of convention and of utilitarian interest. In all his practical reasoning he abstracts only those aspects and gives his attention to only those portions of his object which are relevant to his purposes. Everything becomes but the means to some end. All things exist for the sake of something else. Thus is ever the life of reason.

It is only as æsthetic appreciation that anything may be regarded as its own end. Religion, however fictitious its formulæ may

be, is the recognition of ends. Somehow, somewhen, something must exist for its own sake and be an end in itself. Somewhere there must be fruition and completeness; this is what in figurative language religion is trying to say. It may not be true that we walk by faith and not by sight; so far as it is possible, I think it is better that we walk by sight, but the ends toward which we are walking are set by faith. In the last analysis our judgments are æsthetic judgments. The world has meaning for us only because, as James said, we are interested spectators in the game. We prefer some things to others, and because of our preferences we intervene in the course of events, with foreknowledge of results, in order that desirable results may follow. The fact that certain ends are desirable depends upon the fact that we are the sort of beings we are, and that is all we can say. Hence the religious insistance upon self-appreciation is not altogether sociological fiction.

It is true that the goal which we set for ourselves is an imaginary one—a personality-picture which we strive to make real, and sometimes seek to preserve even though it is necessary to deny the reality of the world of ob-

jects. But is it not possible that the attempt to keep up the feeling of the value of that which we know as self is basically right, even though that self as it appears in consciousness is a fiction and the mechanisms which serve to keep it intact are but figures of speech? What if religious behavior is but a ceremonialism of "purification"—may it not be that the unconscious wish is an elemental fact of existence, and that the self which we strive so hard to keep up, even though, as James says, it turns out to be "objective," differs from other objects in that this, of all objects, we know immediately, whereas we have but second-hand knowledge of the others? Schopenhauer at least would agree with this suggestion, and doubtless would have said that, although our "principal of individuation" is fictitious, the feeling which we have about it is an immediate intuitive knowledge of the "world as will," and that here, if anywhere, the inner reality of the cosmos itself is known to us. Of course Schopenhauer, like Emerson, Bergson, and Jung, would say that the soul which the religious man is so concerned about is but a pinching down, an ephemeral, temporary individuation of the world-soul. I do not intend to

follow this interesting hypothesis into the realm of metaphysics. It is enough to say that the "truth" of religion, like all ultimate truth, lies outside the realm of psychology. We are concerned only with that "truthfulness" which consists in adequate adjustment between the organism and its environment. And from this point of view, we are obliged to say that religious ideas are fictions, the value of which consists wholly in the results of the behavior they start going.

Consequently, one may view either with hope or despair the possibility of a revival of religion. *It all depends upon the kind of people whose spiritual dilemmas are to become the prevailing standards of value.* Little men do not become great men when they become religious, nor do superior people become commonplace. However, a revival of religion, should it occur, would tend to make somebody's solution of the psychological problem of living a standard which most people would try to copy. Therefore, all depends upon the type of man whose spiritual life is to be imitated.

In contemplating the future of religion, just as in contemplating any other possible social future, I have learned to ask one question. It is

very simple—"Who goes there?" The sanctions of religion serve to fix for long periods the supremacy of certain spiritual types of men. We happen to live in an age when mental mediocrity has a hearing and an influence such as it probably never enjoyed before. Therefore, a revival of religion might give such mediocrity a social prestige which would keep it in a position of spiritual control for centuries. This would not, however, be the first time in history that such a thing had happened.

There is a sense in which each man, if let alone, would be religious in his own way. Some will always be religious, and uniquely so, to the end of time. But history teaches us that there have been periods in which religion has become a *mass movement*. And all such periods have tended to fix for subsequent generations the religious forms of those whose spiritual issues thus gained predominance. One sometimes hears it said that organized religion is a clever device imposed upon the masses by representatives of the master class in order to make the average person contented with his lot and obedient to his superiors. I think that a careful study of history will lead one to the conclusion that the reverse of this is the case.

Organized religious movements come, from the sociological standpoint, from below. They represent the survival values of the many. They express the common man's protest against the existing organization of the world, and it is only with great difficulty that those whose personal interests are identical with the preservation of the existing social order turn the sanctities of popular religion into supports for things as they are.

Are there indications that we are likely to have in the near future another mass movement toward some type of organized religion?—for this is what for the masses a religious revival means. If we bear in mind that religion is primarily a mechanism of escape from the real, it would seem that there are many things in our modern world which, psychologically considered, would lead to some sort of religious revival.

There is a widespread desire for some one who can give the world a new gospel or some one who will at any rate capture the imagination of the mass, touch its heart, and lead it back to the old faith. Certain professional evangelists in America have attempted to do this, but their work has not been very sig-

nificant or enduring. For the most part, it has been lacking in sincerity. Revivals of this sort are not the "great revival" which makes of religion a mass movement. They are too obviously deliberate attempts to reach the masses by talking down to them, vulgarizing the values of religion. They are staged performances, not spontaneous awakenings, and while they do create temporary situations which reveal many of the characteristics of the crowd mind —certainly its egoism, hostility, and fixed system of ideas—yet these crowd movements create only an artificial fervor which is soon abated. This is doubtless due to the fact that in such evangelistic campaigns the appeal is not sufficiently representative of the psychic interests of the average man, even of the great mediocrity. It is directed rather to those whose mentality is below the average, the socially unadjusted, and the spiritual types for whom the Hearst papers are intended. Crowd movements which occur among persons of this type are often very violent. They may be dangerous to the social order and their anti-social behavior may often be rationalized by religious ideas. Religious riots have often occurred. But this type cannot long sustain a purpose of

any sort, and hence after the revival there is much "backsliding."

Another indication of the wish for a revival of religion is the recent increase in attendance upon the services of many Protestant churches. Perhaps much of this reported increase is the result of clever advertising and propaganda. Several of the great denominations have accumulated large amounts of money which is being used to enhance their "work." It is the custom in America to "put things over" with publicity and organization, and these things require money. It is not surprising that the churches should yield to the temptation to advance themselves in this way. But religious experience may not be "sold" by the same methods as one may increase the consumption of breakfast food and soap. People may become interested in the religious organization, and participate in its various activities, its social affairs, and its "reform" movements, but they do not thus cause fire to fall upon its altars.

In addition to these indications of a desire for a revival of religion which has not yet come, there are others, such as the many bizarre cults which appear from time to time. There are also the popular interest in spiritualism since

the Great War, and the attempt of the pseudo-scientific to find in what they call "psychology" a gospel according to which one may draw upon an invisible storehouse of energy and thus gain prosperity and increase personal efficiency. And there is the "fundamentalist" movement in various Protestant churches which is largely an attempt to preserve certain seventeenth-century theological doctrines which have been made untenable by scientific discovery. I am told that in Catholic countries, notably in France, a large number of intellectuals are returning to the church. Whether this renewed devotion to the Church is also shared by the masses I do not know. But all these movements taken together mean something. The people are waiting for something to happen. A solution has been in the making for a long time, and it may require only a slight jar to precipitate it.

Men, as ever, want to believe that which will make them feel at home in the world, that which will give their lives a meaning which all can grasp, which will bring them consolation and hope and will free them from the feeling of inferiority. They are beginning to be less optimistic than they were about "progress."

They have been disillusioned about themselves. Ten years ago there was a general belief that war was a thing of the past, yet it fell to our generation to inflict upon itself the most dreadful war in all history. It was a strange, sad, somnambulistic war, a war of cruel machines, and men felt themselves helpless in the grip of social mechanisms which were driving the world to fratricidal destruction. There was much heroism, but it was a deliberate, dogged, often cynical, sort of heroism. There was much bitterness, but little lifting of hearts. It is significant that, in contrast with the Civil War, this one left us no inspiring battle song like the "Battle Hymn of the Republic."

And the peace which followed the war has brought little joy even to the victors. The more one meditates upon this fact, the more amazing it appears to be. I do not believe there was ever a time in history when victorious nations were so unhappy in the period immediately following their triumph. No one is satisfied with the Treaty of Versailles, and it is doubtful if a treaty could possibly have been made which would have been satisfactory. At first there were those who believed that after the war there would be a new and better age.

That new age has not come. Instead, many men of all classes and shades of opinion are predicting the downfall of civilization, and many in despair believe that future wars more deadly and grim than the last are inevitable. Democracy in the hour of its victory turns to social strife and industrial class struggle. Democratic institutions are everywhere under criticism as never before. Thoughtful people are growing tired of politics, are losing confidence in their governments, and are generally distrustful of the powerful propagandist agencies which the war has left in control of the sources of their information. The working class, prosperous as never before, is restless and hungry for power. The prohibition of alcoholic beverages has added to this unrest even in communities where it may have brought a measure of business prosperity. It has made men suspicious, intolerant, distrustful of one another because of the manner in which it was enacted into law and the spirit in which it is enforced,—or not enforced. And this at the very time when every effort should have been made to restore men's confidence in one another and their respect for law.

This note of disillusionment is often seen

in our literature. It accounts, moreover, for that touch of cynicism which one often sees in persons of the younger generation, and it has strongly affected the "social gospel" which until recently held the enthusiasm of large numbers of men of "modern ideas." Many who had ceased to believe in traditional theology transferred their religious interest to the hope of social improvement. While this, too, is in a sense an escape-mechanism, there is commonly something youthful and forward-looking in a faith of this sort. One feels that he is instrumental in the process which is to change the actual world into the ideal. Thus one may have ideals, ideals that are vitalizing and compelling, and with such ideals certain values which had once found expression in traditional religious symbols may be preserved in new form. Many people who have given up Christianity or Judaism, without struggle, have been able to do so because this social gospel had for them the function of religion. Such persons have never known what it is to lose one's faith until they began to question the presuppositions of this dream of social redemption. And many former liberals and radicals have recently had to meet this problem

and are to-day wrestling with a despair which men of less native generosity and idealism perhaps can never quite understand. These too are waiting.

It may be said that our present wave of discouragement is a natural sequence of war. Doubtless, it is, in part. But it is in part a turning, as yet half-conscious, against that modernity which our generation has proudly hailed as progress. I wish to point out briefly some of the factors of this modernity and indicate wherein they are bringing about a situation from which men are likely to seek refuge in religion.

There is obviously the fact of our industrialism. It was felt that the invention and use of power-driven machinery would lighten the burden of toil, and in a degree it has done so. But it has also created the modern industrial proletariat, a class of factory hands, gathered in our manufacturing centers not through any natural, mutual attraction on their part, but through the necessities of industry and the demand for labor. These people have been uprooted, torn out of their ancestral environment and are thrown into a mechanically organized world to which they are not adapted.

Their old habits do not apply. Their labor processes have been depersonalized and standardized by the machine. Their relation with their employer is a matter of an impersonal contract. They have in common no cultural tradition like those of the older societies, but only their labor, their poverty, their subjugation to the profit-seeking aims of industry, and the fact that they all are similarly situated in their relations toward employing capital. Hence, the type of association which prevails among them is necessarily organization for power. By united effort they strive to force certain concessions from their employers. And with each step of increased sense of power their demands and their unrest grow.

Even though in the end they should succeed in dispossessing their employers and in establishing some form of communal ownership of industrial capital, their relations to it and to their labor processes would be little changed. It is very doubtful if their lot would be much improved materially. The worker remains at his machine, or he and others starve. His labor must be directed by a technically trained overseer. His relations with his fellows and toward society as a whole are even more stan-

dardized and impersonal than before. The machine with all its material advantages brings to modern life its own tempo, and compels us to move accordingly. It standardizes and mechanizes the forms of human association. All that is quaint, nonutilitarian, picturesque, fanciful, or unique tends to fall behind and to perish. Human fellowship becomes an unstable equilibrium of forces. And in the degree that men see these forces for what they are, they are going to be unhappy. Labor to-day thinks that it is in revolt against capital. It is really in revolt against the thralldom of industrial processes which under any social system can mean only servitude for the great mass of mankind. As men become aware of this fact—and they must—is it unthinkable that they will seek compensation and escape in religion?

Again there is our democratic dogma. This is "modern." And democracy means equality, and equality means an equal opportunity for all. To the masses, opportunity means chiefly the opening of the doors to material possession and success. Men are ambitious as never before. All demand a materially satisfactory life and without it feel that they are failures.

It is obvious that such success can never in this world become the common lot. In earlier times the common man was apparently relatively content. He found in religion an escape from the feeling of inferiority and a compensation for his humble lot. When men wake up to the fact that the great bulk of their overstimulated material demands cannot be satisfied under any social system it is quite conceivable that they may turn again to religion.

Again, democracy means the enfranchisement of the average man, "the man in the street," and with his coming into power the dilemmas of mediocrity set the standards of value in more things than politics. Writers and lecturers and educators and public entertainers strive to gain his interest, for he is many and his support means affluence. This general appeal to the mediocre average means spiritual standardization. To standardize the public expression of the spiritual side of life is thus to become indifferent to all personal distinction; it is to lose, therefore, the basis of all value. Hence democracy tends to vulgarize all its values. Our journalism, our politics, our motion pictures, our popular revivals of religion all reveal this fact. And with this

lowering of the standard of values life becomes dull and inane—just as we have it in the average American community. Man was not made for this sort of existence. Therefore, mediocrity is always striving to get away from itself, and when it tends to reduce all life to its dead level there are always ready at hand the traditional values and meanings of religion. Many a dull community cultivates religious experience in order to escape from the monotony of its own existence. This accounts for the hold which certain evangelical sects have upon our rural population. There are many people for whom the experience of conversion is the only moment of ecstasy they have ever known in their lives.

We may have in this fact some slight basis for the theory that religious feeling is merely transformed sexual emotion. Thus, it is said, religion gives an outlet to erotic energy for those who are sexually inhibited, emotionally unsatisfied, or whose erotic impulses may be in some way abnormal. When religious practices become orgiastic, as they sometimes do in the revival meetings which thrive in the South and the Middle West, there would appear to be some justification for this view. But

the term "erotic energy" is too broad and vague. If we are to conceive of animal or human behavior as the release of stored-up energy, then we may as well say that there is only one vital force which expends itself through the appropriate patterns of bodily movement when the organism is in the presence of certain stimuli. When striped muscle tissue is energized there is motor activity or overt bodily movement. When unstriped muscle tissue is energized, there is feeling, often accompanied by random movements. Reflexes of the latter kind are known as emotional responses, and when men say that sexual energy is transformed into religious feeling, they are merely saying that certain incipient bodily movements, tropisms, mental images, and emotional reflexes which are normally associated with erotic behavior are also stimulated in religious excitation. Thus the psychologist may say that in certain forms of religious behavior religious object symbols are substituted for the normal objects of the erotic interest. But the erotic interest is itself very complex, including, by hypothesis, almost the whole of the emotional life. There is a sense

in which all crowd behavior is erotic if we accept the broadest definition of sex.

I am suspicious of the concept of energy as it is used in psychology. Of course, bodily movements objectively considered are like other movements of material things, and all alike may be regarded as manifestations of "force." But there we are simply abstracting the effectiveness which we observe in such movements and are putting it behind them, as if it were the mysterious cause of them. The concept of energy has value in physics because it implies a strictly quantitative valuation of the interrelations of movements of matter, and aside from this it has no meaning. Now we have no such quantitative formulæ for most bodily movements. Hence the idea of the transmutation of energy in psychic behavior is at best an analogy drawn from physics.

Instead, therefore, of being content to regard religious feeling as a form of sexual activity, let us admit the fact and pass on. Let us say that for our present purpose it may appear as a form of the desire for adventure. Living itself is an adventure which most people spoil. They confine their behavior and their interests to a dull routine. In time they come

to respond to all the objects about them in a stereotyped way. Their responses are in most part automatic, habitual, and purely utilitarian. Even their thoughts and feelings seldom venture beyond the prescribed and the commonplace. There are whole communities and groups of men and women who thus never in their lives have a thought or emotion or perform an act which is not conventional. The exceptional few keep the adventure of living. The scholar may find it in his pursuit of truth, the artist in creative effort, the successful business man in the sense of power, the cosmopolitan in the richness of his human contacts and the breadth of his interests. But for the many life becomes a humdrum affair indeed. The sunset to them simply means supper-time. The harvest moon suggests the interesting speculation that perhaps one could see to read the newspaper. At the seashore, the widening horizons are no lengthened vista, no magic casements opening on the foam of perilous seas in fairylands forlorn, but one hears only the exclamation, "Ain't that grand?" Such persons, as Emerson said, may travel the world around, but never run away from their own shadow. They return with stories of servants

and "tips" or what they had to eat. I recall a journal which I once read written by such a traveler who had spent one afternoon in Westminster Abbey. He gave its dimensions, the year when it was built, and closed the story with the words, "Full of all kinds of old stuff, very interesting; I'll bet a man could spend a whole day in there."

Now such people feel, they can't help feeling, that life has more in it than it has for them. One has but to watch a large gathering of people, say at a state fair, as they aimlessly and rather wearily move about, to note their eternal seeking for an adventure which never comes. In the faces of fully half there is openly written the evidence of the feeling that life has somehow cheated them. If only there could be more freedom and play, a greater diversity of interests, a common cultural tradition in which the masses by long contact with the fruits of artistic inspiration could see their own experience revalued, community life might itself provide men with adventure which in America vast numbers of them miss. But in that case, the standards must be set by those who occupy a position above popular convention. There must be

room for variation, hence a recognition of personal and congenital differences. There must be appreciation of the social value of those who have the leisure, the ability, the breadth of opportunity to adorn life with interests which are nonutilitarian. In other words, we should have an aristocratic community of some sort. Democracies tend to emphasize the purely utilitarian and to discourage variation. Hence the dominance of mediocrity.

Now religion offers such a community its adventure. In its air of mystery there is a thrill. In the presence of the dreadful dilemma of heaven and hell there is a vital issue which all can grasp. Miracle lifts the imagination out of the commonplace, and the ecstasy of religious experience may be enjoyed in conformity with convention, especially when religion becomes a crowd phenomenon. The average man has the psychic factors of religion already in his unconscious, as we have seen. All that is needed is to break down the social inhibitions to their expression, and for thousands the religious interest begins to glow with an intensity which burns away all that is in conflict with it.

Most of the great mass movements of his-

tory have been motivated by such a desire for adventure. The conscious purpose of such movements is only rationalization; the true adventure is in participating in the movement itself. Illustrations of this fact are seen in the migrations of the Barbarians, the Crusades, the dancing mania which followed the great plague of the Middle Ages, the Reformation, and the French Revolution. In the same way, great revivals of religion commonly appear among that element of the population whose dreary existence offers few other means of adventure. In proof of this, I would offer the fact that primitive Christianity had its origin among the suppressed masses of the Roman Empire; that the Albigensians and Waldensians had their sway in sequestered mountain villages of the Middle Ages; that the Protestant Reformation had its stronghold in the middle class of northern Europe; that Methodism had its greatest appeal to persons of this type in England and America; that the revival which swept over this country at the beginning of the nineteenth century had its beginning in the lonely Cumberland region and spread chiefly through isolated pioneer communities of the South and West, and is kept

up as a regular religious practice chiefly in the regions where it had its origin.

Protestantism is primarily "bourgeoise" and suburban. And in the degree that people's lives are filled with other interests they tend to neglect attendance upon the church. The great stronghold of the Catholic church—except in England—is in the simple-hearted, uneducated peasant class and their descendants in the drab American industrial centers. As the children of immigrant Jews become oriented to America their eagerness for life leads them away from the religion of their fathers, sometimes toward rationalism and ideals of social reconstruction, often toward Reformed Judaism or Christian Science. Thus if men in general again find modern life too cramping and unsatisfactory, a mass return to religion is likely.

Many liberals think that such a mass return to religion is practically impossible. They say that religion belongs to the childhood of the race, when emotion prevailed over the intellect. Its persistence down to our time, they think, is but a survival, a vestige of what was once normal reaction to a world the natural laws of which men did not know. With the coming of scientific culture, religion becomes an anachro-

nism, and must inevitably pass away. August Compte held a view somewhat like this; so have many writers who have championed the cause of science in opposition to theology. Certainly, theology is no longer an effective check upon the advancement of science, so far, at least, as "thinking people" are concerned. But the so-called intellectually emancipated are only a small portion of the population. And even among this element, the unconscious impulses and wishes which commonly find expression in traditional religion survive. Man is not primarily a rational being. Even educated people may find reasons for believing and doing that which, while contrary to logic and known facts, is inspired by their wishing nature.

Religion is not a logical inference from the facts of experience. It is an escape. If religious beliefs could be dispelled by the logic of facts it is difficult to see how religion would ever have come into being. One must have achieved a degree of self-mastery before he can accept certain facts as true. In none of us is that self-mastery fully achieved. So the existence of a body of scientific knowledge which is contrary to certain religious doctrines

will not, necessarily, prevent a return to the older religious beliefs. A slightly different perspective, a little unconscious shifting of the "picture in our heads," aided by a strong social sentiment, and the whole logic of the facts may become different. *Our intellectual hold upon reality is more precarious than most people imagine.* Scientific knowledge is but a phase of modern culture, and in times past whole cultural systems of civilization have flourished and then been lost.

McDougall thinks that the complexity of the modern world has grown so great that even now it may be beyond the control of the intelligent forces of society, and to this thought he adds the fact that the diseugenic breeding in the population of the world to-day tends to eliminate the intellectually superior stocks.

Moreover, it is conceivable that the spread of the rudiments of scientific knowledge, instead of turning out to be a preventive of a mass return to older religious forms, may be one of the impelling motives to just such a return. Note the attempts which have been made in certain communities to stop the "teaching of evolution" in institutions of learning. A well-known biologist who holds a chair in a

leading American university tells me that there is to-day more opposition toward the teaching of facts of natural science which are unacceptable to popular theology than at any time since Darwin published the *Origin of Species*. Be this as it may, and we should not generalize upon one man's experience, popular revolt against a world such as that of our scientific naturalism is to some extent to be expected.

Science reveals the hard facts of nature in all their brutal realism. Its method is necessarily mechanistic, and in its causal connections among phenomena no cosmic consideration for human welfare appears. Intelligent intervention in environmental situations may bring about specific results which are controlled by human effort. But nature as a whole, aside from man's intelligently directed effort, offers him little hope or consolation. Naturalism a century ago promised man a rational universe in which he had but to be wise and good in order that his race might become triumphant and happy. What now has become of that fiction of benevolent nature? And what has scientific study of human nature done for the early naturalistic picture of man? Both are gone.

The older philosophies, themselves inspired in part by the religious interest, saw above the world of nature a superworld of eternal verities in which the good, the true, the beautiful could be possessed by philosophic contemplation, and thus an ideal refuge found from the realities of daily experience. To moderns these goods and truths and beauties exist in the plural, as possibilities of experience to be realized only with effort in our struggle with a partially hospitable world. Intellect is no longer a duplication of eternal verities, but is a function of behavior. And the verities are now not things in themselves, but instruments by which men adapt themselves to their environment.

The world of nature was to the mediæval mind shot through with personal significance. It was electric with mystery and miracle. Spirits good and bad governed its phenomena out of their interest in human welfare. Man in the midst of the world had fellowship with supernatural beings, and angels and demons struggled with one another for the possession of his immortal soul. Thus life had a meaning which gave significance to every human existence. The central fact of history was the

moment of the incarnation of Deity itself in the form of man. And since the hour when the God-man offered up himself for the sin of the world, a supernatural institution, heaven-born, has existed in the earth under whose tutelage man could feel himself secure for all eternity and through whose blessed sacraments the poorest and the least was given salvation.

To-day the cosmos is a self-perpetuating mechanism, grand and awful, but indifferent to man's little existence. Man with all his aspirations and all his works takes his place in the animal kingdom, beginning his life in the process of cell division of a protozoan, spending his days in a ceaseless struggle for survival and closing his eyes at last in a moment of bewildered solitude and pain, and after that science tells us nothing except that after countless millenniums his very little world, on which he suffered and loved, and for whose future he labored during his brief hour, must inevitably follow him in the course of the endless cycle of change which eats up all things.

The very evolutionism which men a few decades ago welcomed because it seemed to guarantee their dreams of social advance has now a different meaning. In the lower forms

of life evolutionism holds that the existing species were formed by a relentless struggle for every breath of life by living things whose tiniest accidental variation might mean their survival or their relentless destruction. These modifications could be passed on by a process which, since Mendel, may be expressed in a mathematical formula and through their accumulation, modifications of the original type might be created which amounted to new species. The result of this view was first, as Dewey has shown, to disprove the notion that each living species was a manifestation of a Platonic idea in nature, and thus to challenge the old "rational constitution of the universe." Again, no law could be derived from such a view which would permit men to predict any particular human future, for there is no assurance of success here, and no inevitable "principle" of progress. Human advancement still has to be achieved, and the final success of the achievement is not underwritten, neither is there anything in nature that enables us to say that anyone out of a number of rival social ideals is destined to inherit the future.

I have put the naturalistic view too briefly, and thus it may appear to be more hopeless

than it really is. In some respects the scientific picture of nature is the result of scientific methodology, and we should not confuse methodological concepts with ontological ones. Perhaps it is unscientific to try to get a picture of the world as a whole. Certainly, in such a picture we get but a synthesis of artificial systems, and not an equivalent of reality. Yet science is the best instrument man has for getting an effective hold upon reality, and its concepts must at least be held true for adequate behavior. In any event, the old supernaturalism, a reverie fabricated out of the wish to render our world more congenial to man, cannot without outside support, survive in the workshop world of science.

Can humanity stand the universe without its supernatural? I do not know. Through education and journalism various phases of this scientific picture are in a crude form coming to be part of popular knowledge. If the process continues unhindered, we may in a few decades have a situation unprecedented in history in which the average member of society, caught as he is in the relentless process of our industrialism and forced to a life of drudgery and sense of inferiority, strives to bear his

burdens without the consolations of religion. What forms of escape will men then have from monotony and defeat?

It is far from my thought to suggest that "the masses" be kept in ignorance. What is much more likely is that they keep themselves in ignorance. This new world view, however we may soften it, demands serious readjustment on the part of the mass of mankind. Our industrialism alone is demanding of us about all we can bear. We have not yet any of us developed the mental habits which are necessary to control it and make it serve us properly. The habits necessary to a re-orientation to our new cosmos are not going to be easy, and the change has come very rapidly. If all those who are going to entertain this new world view could personally pass through all the mental processes which go to make it up, or even such a portion of them as would enable them to master one scientific discipline, the training thus acquired might make the emotional transition easier. But as yet the masses have accepted some of the *products* of science, but few have acquired its mental *processes*. And it is the processes that count, for in them, as in the mastery of any other technic, there is that

self-discipline which may in the end lift one above his technic into a new spiritual freedom. Art begins where technic leaves off. And this must be increasingly true of the art of living in the modern world. It is one thing for men to lose their faith because they have ceased to believe in the customary objects of religion. It is a very different thing for them to outgrow the old objects because such objectivation is no longer demanded by inner and unconscious needs.

It is conceivable, then, that there will be a mass revolt against our scientific culture along with revolt against other elements which are called "modern," and that in such a revolt *religion will be used as a weapon* against those whose "enlightened" teaching would rob the people of their consolations. It is significant that each great mass movement in religion has followed a wave of intellectual advance, and has been the weapon used by the common man in his struggle against a situation which demanded of him too great a readjustment and thus made him feel unconsciously inferior. Christianity follows upon the heels of the Augustan age during which both at Rome and at Alexandria very rapid intellectual advance

was being made. The result was a submergence of the whole spirit of ancient culture for many centuries. The Reformation followed upon the Renaissance, the revival of learning which set Italy in the fifteenth century intellectually on fire and had begun to spread its light all over Europe. The student of history should not forget the picture of the Florentine mobs led by Savonarola driving out of the city the philosopher Machiavelli, along with the Medician family whose patronage had done much to make the new learning possible, also one should remember the discouraging influence which Savonarola is said to have had upon the art of Botticelli. Had Erasmus had his way, the whole history of modern Europe might have been different. But in the Reformation the average Christian in northern Europe found a means which justified his resistance to a "worldly and pagan" wisdom which it was felt was seducing the mother church.

English Puritanism also follows the brilliant Elizabethan age, and the "great revival" which appeared simultaneously in England and America at the close of the eighteenth century came as a reaction against what has been called the most mellow and like unto classic antiquity

of all the Christian centuries, the century which spoke of itself as the "age of enlightenment."

That century was also followed by "the Revolution," another popular manifestation of the same resistance. It is psychologically an interesting fact that Revolutionism is closely related to the Messianism of Christianity and Judaism. I recently received a tract published by a group of contemporary believers in the "second coming of Christ." One needed to change but a few superficial terms to turn it into an excellent piece of propaganda for the Communist revolution. There was the same condemnation of the rich and powerful of earth, the same expectation of a sudden change, the same confidence that after the cataclysm in which the now dominant "evil" elements in society would be destroyed, the meek should inherit the earth, and there would be peace, brotherhood, and justice.

Much radicalism, moreover, retains all the unconscious complexes of Messianism. There is the same will to destruction of a civilization in which the believers feel themselves victims, crushed, and inferior, the same self-laudation of those who contemplate the change, the same hope of escape into an imaginary social order.

It is no accident that before radicalism showed its real aims in the Russian Revolution, Jesus was hailed as a socialist, and even Rauschenbusch could express the aims of socialism with texts drawn from the Hebrew prophets and the gospels. What radicalism changes is only the names, the symbolic fictions in which the Messianic hope is expressed. Thus, the Day of the Lord is the revolution; the Kingdom of God on earth, the co-operative commonwealth; Babylon is capitalism about to be destroyed; the saints are the proletariat, and the whole world-change is to "come quickly like a thief in the night." Emotionally, psychologically, there is no great difference between the Book of Revelation in which the ancient religious Messianic hope finds its culminating literary expression, and the first volume of Karl Marx's *Capital.*

It is possible, therefore, that a mass return to religion as a form of escape from present civilization may take the form of a revolution in which the unconscious motive, instead of assuming traditional religious symbols, would clothe itself in the scientific jargon of contemporary economics.

Such a movement is not, however, likely in America in the near future. It does not appeal

to the masses, who as yet hold their popular scientific ideas along with their traditional religious beliefs. And even should a social revolution occur, men would soon find that it did not really offer them an escape from that against which religion is a form of protest. There would still be the possibility of turning to mass movements of a religious nature even in a co-operative commonwealth. We shall probably see such a return to religion in Russia before many years.

Up to this point I have been concerned with the possibility of a mass or crowd movement against certain elements in modern civilization —a revolt which may take the form of a revival of traditional religion. Such a movement is possible, and it would produce just those social effects which might be expected of the sort of persons who happened to participate in it. If the dominant elements in the mass were by nature gentle, respectful toward our best possessions of beauty and truth, and were concerned primarily for self-purification, such a mass movement might bring new values into our social life, give it new and better ideals, and mollify the social conflict with tolerance, good will, mutual trust, and devotion to

the general good. It might thus exist alongside our scientific culture, denying some of its mechanistic implications, and still leave it relatively free to continue in the course of its development.

If, however, the masses who predominated in such a movement were ignorant, resentful, bent upon establishing their self-importance, and upon compelling assent to their dogma on part of those whose nonconformity seemed to challenge the ideals of the crowd, a mass movement back to religion might easily plunge modern civilization into another age of darkness. The social psychologist, who has learned to see through the professions with which contemporary crowd movements disguise their true nature and intent, has reason to regard the probable revival of religion in America with serious misgivings. The psychologist knows the type of man who would thus make of religious unction his weapon. He also knows to what extent civilization may suffer at the hands of such a man.

Are we then shut up to the alternations of such a possible movement or a despairing realism? To give either of these as the answer to the social problems of religion is to assume

that men cannot stand this universe without resorting to fictions. It is to say that unconscious impulses and desires must ever remain secret to the subject who entertains them, that we can only be oriented to our world when we are unaware of the meaning of much of our behavior. It is true that many of our wish-fancies may never be satisfied in a world like ours. But may we not seek to understand them, to wrestle with them consciously, to revalue the symbols in which they seek objective expression and vicarious satisfaction? Is not this precisely the aim of both philosophy and art? And need we throw away these age-old faith objects just because we have learned their true function? The artist does not leave his world sordid and unadorned because he knows that his creations are human achievements. He knows, moreover, that many of them are symbols, yet they are symbols which give to living a character and a meaning.

People have sought in religion a vindication of all value at once. Our world as a whole must be either saved or lost. Perhaps we have formed the habit because we shrink from the task of discriminating value in experience as such. We may create meaning for our lives

and such meaning is real, and there is much in the valuation of experience which transcends our logical formulas and can only be expressed in symbolic language. It is not by taking refuge in these symbols, and thus making out of them an imaginary home for our childish wish-fancies, that we reach our spiritual maturity. Neither is it in dogma and prescribed ritual that the truly spiritual life must alone find its realization. Always there have been those who alone have wrestled with the problems which we have outlined, have somehow faced destiny, and in facing have conquered.

Something happens to him who thus finds himself. Not an objective fact in the world is changed for him, and yet all is permeated by something incommunicable, something known immediately which tells him that the whole which he, in a new way, finds to be the ground of his own existence is not a universal bankruptcy, but is self-contained and self-sufficient. Ask such a one to express his faith, and he gives no theory of the universe, no repetition of a dogma learned in childhood, but he speaks of a sense of harmony within which is also a harmony which pervades his world. He has come to see "life as an æsthetic phenomenon."

All the religious mystics of all time have possessed such immediate knowledge of reality, and all their theological phrases were but halting conventional attempts to say what they smiled to know was incommunicable! Perhaps this immediate knowledge is ours by nature. I often feel that all living things must possess it, and that the vague intimation of it is that which leads the religionist to seek to save his self-appreciation, to return to infancy, to find reconciliation with the Father. And the spiritual life is life itself, only so few really let themselves live. Perhaps this is what the writer of the fourth Gospel means when he says in the words of the Symbol-Jesus, "I am the Truth."

You may teach a creed, but this discovery each must make for himself. And when one makes it he may find that it has little to do with organized or conventional religion. The progress away from conventional religion is but the first phase, the negative side of the change which must take place before people may become self-owning men and women. We defined religion as the symbolic appreciation of the mystery of existence in terms of the interests of man as an ego. Thus, much of re-

ligion serves to help man "stand this universe." Hence religion constructs an idealized cosmos which is congenial to man. But it is not at bottom the world of objects which people cannot stand. The real trouble is that people *cannot "stand themselves."* It is the struggle for self-appreciation which leads people to take refuge in a world of ideals. The systems of refuge are designed to save our fictions about ourselves. And the seriousness of a realistic view of nature is that it throws people back upon their inner conflicts. It is these conflicts which it is the function of religious beliefs to disguise, and solve for the believer. Men can get along with the facts of existence, meet and wrestle with them when they can face the facts of themselves. Man must forgive his own "sin"; that is what he does unconsciously by the use of the symbolism of redemption. He must wrestle to master those impulses in himself which cause conflict between his personality-picture and reality. So long as the meaning of the practices through which these ends are achieved remains unconscious, man will remain conventionally religious.

Suppose that the effort for self-knowledge which religion spends in the conviction of sin,

were consciously directed toward reassembling one's personality-picture so as to make it an effective instrument of orientation. The conflicts in human nature then become conscious and habits are formed which, instead of disguising the true nature of these conflicts, are intelligent solutions of them. The right alternative to despairing realism is to lift the meaning of religious practices into consciousness, as we have tried to do in this study.

At the very beginning of European civilization a Greek philosopher said, "Know thyself," and the most thought-provoking writer of the nineteenth century heralded the coming of the truly "free spirits," not "glib-tongued, scribe-fingered slaves of democratic taste and its modern ideas, not mere blunt honest fellows," minds without solitude, who are content to deny ancient dogma, but spirits with foregrounds and backgrounds, "anterior and posterior souls," bearers of a wisdom like that of the serpent which crawls under altars and old sanctities and follows the "Jesuitism and Tartuffery" of man's instincts in their dark turnings; and also bearers of the wisdom of the eagle which sees all things from above.

Self-understanding and command is the path

of wisdom as old as Socrates and as new as the still misunderstood Nietzsche, and without it men are spiritual automatons. The spiritual "revival" which the world needs is an awakening in which those who are capable of self-criticism, and of appreciating the values of civilization, find themselves and one another, and perform the task which such as they have carried on in every age. Your place in the world is to keep the lights burning on the altar of life, to lift experience out of squalor and the mud. While some have been struggling for places of advantage, have had their little day of power, have said their few lines and gone through their pantomime and passed from the world stage, have quarreled over the preservation of fictions which they did not understand, others have slowly created those habits and values and ideals which differentiate men from beasts. Out of their own sensitiveness, and their hours of meditation, they have spun an invisible web of truths and sanctities and acquired preferences that have caught and held the animal impulses of man and have drawn his energies toward the attainment of unseen goods. This alone is the course of human advancement, the triumph of "spirit"

over matter. It is a task which must be performed by the knowing ones of our generation if life is to continue to have meaning and civilization is to be worth its cost in effort and struggle.

The Church in the Middle Ages knew this great secret. When asked to show its works it did not merely point to the fact that it had led the mass along a level path toward some imaginary goal which was to be shared equally. It pointed to a St. Francis or an Augustine, to those who had risen above the mass and had thus reached higher planes of human experience spirits whose very existence in the earth was enough to redeem an age. The line of spiritual advancement of the world is not horizontal, it is vertical; it consists in the *distance between the lowest man and the highest man.* That which distinguishes the higher from the lower is the spiritual life. It is a fundamental fact of human existence and cannot be destroyed by any change in popular beliefs about the world. The spiritual meaning of life is this *distinction of worth;* it is lost when men idealize the undifferentiated, the mass, for without a sense of distinction among men there can be no values It is the unwillingness to

admit this fact of distinction, the substitution for it of those valuations which flatter the undifferentiated mass because it is many and powerful, hence, the emphasis upon mediocre dilemmas and upon goods which may be identical for all—in other words, it is in the *vulgarization of our values* that modern life is losing its spirituality and is drifting toward chaos. Give the fact of distinction its normal valuation, set it free from popular fictions about it, let it become the goal of all personal and social endeavor, and it will redeem the modern world from its vulgarity; it will make men again conscious that living has a meaning. The revival of interest in spiritual things which alone can save our world—whether that renewed interest is expressed in ancient symbolism or not makes little difference—must be a new recognition of the distinction of worth. To this end men must learn to see through the disguises which the unconscious fabricates in order to save their egoism. They must repent of their fictions about themselves, strive to see themselves as they really are, and out of such conscious struggle for value in experience, give to life again a spiritual order of rank.

# INDEX


Absolute, 78
Adaptation, 3
Adler, Alfred, 39
—— *The Neurotic Constitution,* 55, 101, 308
Adolescence, 133
Ambivalent feeling, 134
America, 343, 373
American community, 354
—— Legion, 225
Ames, Edward Scribner, *The Psychology of Religious Experience,* 44
Anthropology, 3
Antiochus Epiphanes, 283
Anxiety, 189
Apostolic Age, 29
Aristotle, 324
Ascetic morality, 325
Attitudes, 285

Baptism, 206, 292
Behaviorism, 278
Belief, 281
Bergson, Henri, *Mind Energy,* 40
—— *Creative Evolution,* 340
Bible, 68
Bleuler, 96
Book of Revelation, 157, 240
Botticelli, 371
Brill, A. A., 39
—— *Fundamental Conceptions of Psychoanalysis,* 95, 232
—— *Psychoanalysis,* 103
Brill, A. A., Personal correspondence, 286
Buddhism, 152, 278
Bunyan, 183

Calvin, 321
Catholic, 284
Catholic Christianity, 224
Catholic Church, 361
Catholicism, 279
Catholics, 278
Censorship, 311, 331
Ceremonial morality, 322
—— washing, 292, 298, 307
Ceremonialism, 51, 283, 286
—— of crowds, 317
Ceremonies, 300
Child psychology, 121
Childlike attitude, 132
Christ, 86, 147, 204, 215, 284
—— a symbol, 88
—— sacrifice of, 218
Christendom, 281
Christian church, 254
—— ethic, 324
—— gospel, 150
—— hymns, 72
Christian Science, 361
Christianity, 62, 65, 151, 206, 281
—— crowd thinking in, 331
—— ethic of, 313
—— infantile element in, 141
—— origin of, 24
—— plebeian element in, 327
—— popular, 329
Christians, 280

Christmas tree, 68
Christ's miracles, 206
Church, the, 50, 224, 226, 238
—— and the world, 245
—— as bride, 240
—— as mother, 238
Church member, 221
Churches, 316
Cicero, 314
City of God, 238
Civil War, 347
Civilization, destruction of, 372
—— western, 25
Class distinction, 203
Coercion, 266
Communist Revolution, 372
Compensation, 107
Compulsion neurosis, 283
—— neurotic, 297
Compulsive behavior, 51, 281
Comte, August, 10, 362
Confession, 251
—— of faith, 257, 262
—— of sin, 254
Conflict, 132, 193
Conscience, 151, 297
Conversion, 193, 201, 354
Crapsey, Algernon, *The Ways of the Gods,* 119
Creator, the, 79, 81, 117
Crowd, the, 266, 276, 315, 331, 344, 374
—— behavior, 312
—— ideas, 274
—— mind, 264
—— mind in religion, 276
Crowds, 247, 268
—— The behavior of, 57
Cruden, 135
Crusades, 360
Cults, 54, 345
Cumberland region, 360
Cyrus story, 122

Darwin, 202, 274, 364
Decalogue, 333
Deity, the, 70, 151
Dementia præcox, 161
Democratic age, 315
Democratic dogma, 352
Democracy, 25, 348
Devil, the, 135
Dewey, John, 367
—— *How We Think,* 37
Dionysian cult, 147
Dionysus, 67, 137
Disillusionment, 348
Dispersion, the, 229
Displacement, 138
Distinction, 382
Docetics, 70
Dogma, 53
Dogmatism, 267
Dreams, 92, 103
Drews, Arthur, *The Christ Myth,* 204

Early Christians, 278
Ebionim, 327
Eden, 122
—— story, 124
Edwards, Jonathan, 83
Ego, 253, 258
—— interest, 256
—— libido, 216
Egomania of religious crowds, 270
Einstein, 272
Electra complex, 124
Eleusinian mysteries, 223
Elizabethan Age, 371
Ellis, Havelock, *The Dance of life,* 38, 40, 325
Emerson, 340, 357
Emotional fixations, 126
England, 361
Erasmus, 371
Escape, 10, 246, 323
Esoteric, 7
—— group, 276
Ethics of Christianity, 313
Evangelical sects, 354
Evangelists, 343

Evil father, 137
Evolution, 363
—— in religion, 3
Exhibition, 256
Externals of religion, 276
Extrovert, 17

Faith, 59, 143, 215, 274
Faraday, 200
Father image, 115, 142
—— conflict with, 132
—— the function of, 128
—— reconciliation with, 133
Father, perfect, 140
Fictions, 61, 102, 376
Fiske, John, *Myths and Myth Makers,* 70
First Cause, 81
Fixation, 217
Flag, 34
Forgiveness, 192
France, 346
Frazer, James G., *The Golden Bough,* 117, 205, 285, 294, 302, 307
French Revolution, 360
Freud, Sigmund, 39, 301, 332
—— *The Interpretation of Dreams,* 47, 65, 104
—— *Totem and Taboo,* 48, 144, 295, 305
—— *The General Introduction to Psychoanalysis,* 92, 241, 249, 289, 291, 300

Genesis, 21
Gestures, 285
Gnostics, 70
God, as Father, 119
—— as King, 117
—— idea of, 78, 116
—— names of, 79
Goethe, 202
Golden Age, 125
Gospels, 29, 284
Group consciousness, 264

Habit, 282
Habits, 291
Haeckel, 275
Hamlet, 85
Hearst papers, 344
Hebrew Bible, the taboo in, 333
Hebrews, 70, 146, 147, 223, 224, 228, 259, 306
Hera, 120
Heresy, 274
Hero, 205
Hero-Savior, 214
Higher criticism, 87
Höffding, Harald, *The Philosophy of Religion,* 47, 74
Holy City, the, 236
Hosea, 229
Huxley, 202, 275

Ignorance, 369
Immorality, 166
Inferiority, 194
—— feeling of, 353
Ingersoll, Robert G., 20
Inner conflicts, 283
Insane, delusions of the, 190
Intellect, 32
Introvert, 17
Israel, 260

James, William, 100, 339, 340
—— *The Varieties of Religious Experience,* 31, 47, 89, 161, 169, 172, 180, 187, 200, 251
—— *The Will to Believe,* 33, 81
—— *Principles of Psychology,* 33, 86, 100
—— *Pragmatism,* 38
Jehovah, 80
Jesus, 9, 324
—— ethic of, 11
—— historical problem of, 87
Jewish Christianity, 321

Jewish religious community, 228
Jews, 229
Joseph cult, 119
Journalism, 353
Judas Maccabæus, 228
Jung, C. G., 301, 332, 340
—— *Psychological Types,* 16
—— *The Psychology of the Unconscious,* 48, 206, 207, 231
—— *Analytical Psychology,* 300
Justification, 321

Kabbalists, 70
Kant, Immanuel, *Critique of Practical Reason,* 168
Kingdom of God, 155, 292
Ku Klux Klan, 225, 273

Lady Macbeth, 306
Liberalism, 8, 57
—— exoteric, 26
Lincoln, Abraham, 274
Lippmann, Walter, *Public Opinion,* 89
Lord's Prayer, 74
Loyalty, 260

McCurdy, John T., *Problems in Dynamic Psychology,* 308
McDougall, William, *Is America Safe for Democracy?,* 18, 363
Machiavelli, 371
Magic, 7, 285, 302, 320
Map, 34
Martin, Everett Dean, *The Behavior of Crowds* (Harper & Brothers), 267
Martyrdom, 259
Marx, Karl, 22, 373
Mass, 382
Mass movement, 342
Masses, the, 275, 315
—— ignorance of, 369
Mechanism, 366
—— of defense, 104
Mechanisms, 321
—— of escape, 111
Mediocrity, 202, 265
Mendel, Gregor, 367
Messiah, 204
Messianic, 236
Messianism and Revolutionism, 372
Metaphysics, 76
Methodism, 360
Middle Ages, 309
Milton, John, *Paradise Lost,* 136
Mincha, 146
Minority group, 259
Miracle, a, 249
Modern ideas, 349
Modernism, 248
Monotheism, 228
Moral criteria, 166
—— ideas, 167
—— reform, 316
Morality, 313
—— of religion, 312
—— of religion is ritualistic, 318
—— in Old Testament, 332
Mormons, 321
Mother as "Bride," 235
Mother fixation, 233
—— image, 234
Motion pictures, 353
Mysteries, 28
Mystery, 7
Mystics, 218, 378
Myths, 67

Nantucket, 335
National Board of Review of Motion Pictures, 310
Natural man, 150
Natural selection, 318
Naturalism, 364
Neurosis, 301
Neurotics, 282, 286, 291, 299

New Age, 348
New Jerusalem, 228
New Testament, 74, 156
Newton, Isaac, 200
Nietzsche, 11, 200, 315, 328, 381

Obscenity, 136
Occult, 6
Œdipus, 206
—— complex, 105, 123, 142, 241
—— myth, 122
Old Testament, 294
Order of rank, 383

Paine, Thomas, 274
Paranoic, 62
Paranoiac patients, 111
Parent images, 263
Patrick, G. T. W., *The Psychology of Social Reconstruction,* 225
Penitent, 256
People's Institute of New York, 310
Perfect Father, 140
Persecution, 272
Personality picture, 101, 255
Pessimism, 64, 154
Phobias, 300
Plato, 67, 325
Plebeian, 327
Pluto, 136
Politics, 348, 353
Popular Christianity, 330
—— thinking, 19
Priesthood, 263
Primitive father, 143
Primitive people, 222
Progress, 346
Prohibition, 330
Projection, 139
Proletariat, the, 327, 350
Propaganda, 264, 268
Prophets, 224
Protestant, 9, 248, 284
Protestant churches, 345
Protestantism, primarily bourgeoise, 361
Protestants, 24, 252, 330
Prudishness, 309
Psychoanalysis, 49
Psychology, 45
Psychopathology, 48
Psychoses, 194
Public rites, 126
Purification, 312
Puritanism, 330, 371
Purity, 333

Radicalism, 372
Radicals, 349
Rank, Otto, 39
—— *The Myth of the Birth of the Hero,* 48, 205
Rationalism, 15
Rauschenbusch, Walter, *Christianity and the Social Crisis,* 373
Realism, 375
Reality, 76
Rebirth, 292
Reconciliation, 133, 150
Redeemer, 204
Redemption, 56, 186, 219, 334
Reform, 273, 311
Reformation, the, 280, 360, 371
Reformed Judaism, 361
Regression, 49
Regressive tendency, 245, 292
Religion, a personal interest, 226
—— a special interest, 281
—— a weapon, 370
—— above morality, 313
—— an escape, 10
—— and art, 43
—— and social situations, 56
—— and the neurosis, 301
—— and the psychosis, 194
—— and the unconscious, 56
—— as æsthetic judgment, 338
—— as sexual emotion, 354

Religion, as sociological fiction, 339
—— definition of, 99
—— denies the world, 60
—— externals of, 276
—— function of, 338
—— future of, 341
—— in northern and southern Europe, 131
—— infantile element in, 49
—— mass movements in, 342
—— may not be taught as creed, 21
—— more than experience, 5
—— motives of, 6
—— mysteries of, 28
—— perverse tendencies in, 54
—— psychological aim of, 148
—— psychology of, 6, 44
—— regressive tendency in, 292
—— shame in, 258
—— symbolism in, 66
—— world view of, 113
Religious behavior, 278, 334, 340
—— ceremonies, 283
—— community, 220, 273, 275
—— crowd, 266
—— experience, 345
—— fellowship, 222
—— groups, 222, 226, 249
—— ideas, 59
—— practices, weird, 1
—— symbols, 103
—— revival, 198
—— riots, 344
Renaissance, 371
Renunciation, 161
Repentance, 255
Repression, 90
Resistance, 254
Return, infantile, 217
—— to the mother, 237
Reverence, 134
Revival, 360
Revival, as mass revolt, 374
Revivals, 359
Revolutionism and Messianism, 372
Ritual, 316
Rivers, W. H. R., *Instinct and the Unconscious,* 89, 300
Robinson, James Harvey, *The Mind in the Making,* 319
Roman Empire, Christianity in, 360
Rousseau, 23
Russian Revolution, 373

Sacrament, 307
Sacraments, 279
Sacrifice, 146, 216
St. Augustine, 200, 382
St. Francis, 324, 382
St. Paul, 9, 69, 150, 186, 199, 261, 306
Samson, 206
Santayana, George, *Scepticism and Animal Faith,* 75
Savior, 214
Savonarola, 371
Schopenhauer, 340
Science, 18, 19, 32, 63, 113
—— an instrument, 368
—— and religion, 362
Scrupulousness, 308
Second coming, 372
Sects, 261
Self-appreciation, 379
Self-knowledge, 219, 379
Self-revelation, 253
Seneca, 314
Sex, 122
Sexual interest, 132
Shame, 258
Sin, 56, 152, 153, 164, 298
—— of the world, 159
Sinful acts, 279

Slave morality, 328
Smith, William Benjamin, *The Pre-Christian Jesus*, 75
Social advance, 366
—— Gospel, 12, 14, 349
—— order, 343
—— psychology, 5
Sociological fiction, 339
Socrates, 381
Soul, 84
Spencer, Herbert, *Principles of Sociology*, 116
Spiritual advancement, 382
Spiritual life, the, 203, 220, 221, 378
Spirits, 365
Spiritualism, 345
Standardization, 353
Starbuck, E., *The Psychology of Religion*, 126
Stoics, 325
Strauss, 10
Supernatural, the, 368
Symbolic meanings, 69
Symbolism, 61
Symbols, 93, 300

Taboo, 298, 332
Taboos, 51, 295, 300
Theologians, 216
Thinking, 37
Tolstoy, 173, 176, 200
Totem animal, 135
Tradition, 22
—— Christian, 29
Transference, 127, 219, 249, 250, 256, 262
Truth, 77

Unconscious, the, 91, 126
United States, 34

Veblen, Thorstein, *The Instinct of Workmanship*, 320
Versailles, Treaty of, 347
Virgin, the, 213
Virgin Mary, 120
Vulcan, 136
Vulgarization, 383

Washing, 298
Watson, John B., 46
—— *Psychology from the Standpoint of a Behaviorist*, 44, 282
White, William, 39
Wilson, Woodrow, *Atlantic Monthly*, 1923, 323
Wish-fancies, 376
Witchcraft, 136
Wolfenbüttel papers, 10
World, as a family affair, 125
World war, 350
Worship, 307
Wundt, 332

Yom Kippur, 147

Zebach, 146
Zeus, 70, 120
Zion, 231